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Augustana Heritage

Declaration of Faith

As a christian body in general, and particularly as Evangelical Lutherans we the undersigned, members of the Augustana Synod, acknowledge that the holy Scriptures, the revealed word of God, are the only infallible rule and standard of faith and practice, and also contain and possess not only the three oldest Symbols (the Apostolic, the Nicene and the Athanasian) but also the unaltered Augsburg Confession as a short and correct summary of the principal Christian doctrines, understood as developed and explained in the other Symbolical books of the Lutheran Church.



Lars Paul Esbjorn

T. N. Hasselquist

O. Andrewson

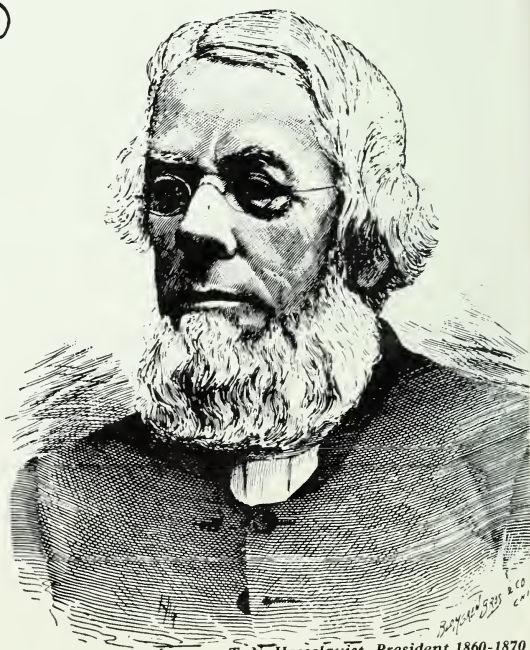
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Augustana *Heritage*

A HISTORY OF THE
AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH

By

G. EVERETT ARDEN

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TO MY
FATHER AND MOTHER

See first volume

Preface

ABOVE the entrance of the library of the University of Colorado at Boulder, there is this inscription: "He Who Knows Only His Own Generation Remains Always a Child." To grow up means to learn; all learning makes for growth and maturation. But the historical discipline has a particular and special function in the learning and growing process, for history provides the perspective upon which mature understanding is predicated. It has been said that a sense of history is to people what memory is to individuals; indeed, it may be added that people without a sense and knowledge of history are like individuals afflicted with amnesia; they know not who they are, because they know not whence they have come.

Perhaps no nation has greater need of a historical awareness than America, for America is a strange and wonderful synthesis of many people, cultures, traditions, and faiths. To know something of these components is to appreciate the richness of the synthesis. That is why Carl Sandberg once exclaimed, "We've got to show those who mold the future where things came from."

Like America, the Lutheran Church in this hemisphere is a synthesis with numerous components. It is composed of many traditions originally transplanted from Europe, and each possessing its own unique character and particularity. Thus, American Lutheranism is a synthesis the richness of which is understood and appreciated only through some knowledge of its parts.

In the hope that the story of the Augustana Church would add a significant dimension to an understanding and appreciation of the Lutheran Church in America, the Executive Council of the Augustana Church decided in 1961 to publish a history of the Synod. The writer was invited to undertake the task of preparing this study, with the request that the project be completed by the time of the dissolution of the corporate existence of the Augustana Church.

To facilitate this demanding schedule the board of directors of Augustana Theological Seminary granted the writer a leave of absence from teaching duties for two quarters during the school term of

1961-1962, and engaged Dr. Robert Fischer and Dr. Johannes Knudsen of the Lutheran Seminary, Maywood, Illinois, to teach the historical courses at Augustana Seminary during the writer's sabbatical leave. To the Seminary Board, to Dr. Karl E. Mattson and the Seminary administration, and to Doctors Fischer and Knudsen, grateful thanks are sincerely tendered. Indeed, one of the most gratifying aspects of this project has been the help, encouragement and ready co-operation which has been so generously given by so many.

Though the author of this study assumes full responsibility for every statement and conclusion in this historical account, he acknowledges with appreciation the help and counsel which he has received from many quarters. To the consulting committee, chosen by the Executive Council of the Church, composed of Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, president of the Augustana Church, Dr. Carl W. Segerhammar, vice-president of the Augustana Church, Dr. D. Verner Swanson, for sixteen years the secretary of the Augustana Church, and Dr. Robert Holmen, St. Paul, Minnesota, a special word of appreciation is due for their help and guidance. To Dr. Birger Swenson, manager of Augustana Book Concern, who did much to initiate the project and gave invaluable assistance at every point of the entire endeavor, and to Dr. Victor E. Beck, secretary of literature of the Augustana Church, who edited the manuscript and offered helpful comments and suggestions, the writer is deeply indebted. He also acknowledges valued counsel received from Dr. O. Fritiof Ander, professor of history, Augustana College, and Dr. A. D. Mattson, professor at Augustana Seminary. To his colleagues on the faculty of Augustana Seminary, whose work was necessarily made heavier because of the writer's absence for two quarters, to the library staff of Augustana Seminary, and to Pastor Joel Lundeen, director of the Augustana archives, the writer expresses sincere appreciation. Grateful thanks also go to Mrs. Einar Malmgren, Rock Island, who as the typist of the manuscript managed on numerous occasions to meet almost impossible deadlines with patience and good humor. And finally to his own family, for their unfailing encouragement, and especially to his wife, Irene, who has diligently guarded his writing hours from needless interruption and cheerfully borne the pressures which a demanding time schedule has imposed upon the home, the writer is humbly and deeply grateful.

The heritage of Augustana is but one of the tributaries of the mainstream of American Lutheranism. As it reflects the grace and mercy of Christ, the Lord of the Church, and the sacrificial devotion

of men and women who would serve Him, it is perhaps a true symbol of the whole Church. It may be the mission of such a symbol to foster and encourage a greater and deeper sense of Christian unity to the end that a more positive Christian witness may be given to the world, and greater Christian tasks be undertaken on behalf of the world.

G. EVERETT ARDEN

Lutheran School of Theology,
Rock Island, Illinois,
Epiphany, 1963

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Survey of a Century

The Centennial Service—A Symbol

THE AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH has experienced some memorable moments during its century of life and growth in America. But perhaps no occasion has been more historically and symbolically significant than the event which transpired in Rock Island, Illinois, on Thursday evening, June 9, 1960. That night, in connection with the one hundred and first annual convention of the Church, a great assembly of people filled the field house of the Rock Island High School for the Centennial Service of the Augustana Church.

On the rostrum was the president of the Church together with other officers and distinguished colleagues. Flanking them on either side were men of eminence representing a broad spectrum of the Christian community throughout the world. There was the Very Reverend Gunnar Hultgren, primate of the Church of Sweden, accompanied by several of his own clergy. There were Dr. Carl Lundquist, executive director of the Lutheran World Federation, Dr. Peng Fu, president of the Lutheran Church of Hong Kong, Pastor Per Overland from the Lutheran Church in Norway, Pastor Maurice Sweeting, representing the Lutheran Church in France, Dr. Donald F. Landwer, speaking for the National Council of Churches in the U. S. A., Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, Dr. Norman Menter, president of the National Lutheran Council, Dr. Raymond Wargelin, president of the Finnish Lutheran Church in America, and Dr. Alfred Jensen, president of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. Each of these leaders had a place on the program, expressing the well-wishes of his own constituency. And then, to make an already imposing occasion all the more impressive, public acknowledgment was given of greetings and felicitations received from the Honorable Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States, and from twenty-seven state governors and forty-seven United States Senators, as well as the presidents of several American church bodies, including the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Evangelical Covenant Church.

This was a moment of *historical* importance. It marked the end of a full century of corporate existence for the Augustana Church, calling attention to the abundant goodness of a gracious God who had wonderfully blessed the work of His people. Moreover, it marked the beginning of a second century which would undoubtedly witness the demise of the Augustana Church as a separate and independent body, as it even now prepared to incorporate itself in the larger structure of the proposed *Lutheran Church in America*.

It was, however, even more profoundly a moment of deep *symbolical* significance. The whole context of this assembly exemplified what had happened to an immigrant church during the past one hundred years. There was, for example, the assembly itself—a cross section of middle class America. There were doubtless a few who sat that evening in the field house who could claim the distinction of being immigrants, and whose memories of church life in the old country naturally led them to feel a strong kinship and loyalty toward Augustana. But they were few indeed! The vast majority in that audience were American born natives with only the vaguest awareness of immigrant forefathers. And a considerable number had family names that bespoke an ancestry which had no connection whatever with a Scandinavian background. This congregation was itself a symbol of the breakdown and complete abandonment of an earlier immigrant exclusiveness which conceived its mission to be directed primarily to a Scandinavian constituency. The Church here assembled was typically American, an integral part of the community, a fact to which the political leaders of the land gave hearty testimony, including governors, senators, and even the President of the United States himself.

Moreover, the roll of distinguished guests gathered on the rostrum was significant. By both his genial presence and his spoken words, the Archbishop of Sweden symbolized and expressed the change of relationship which had slowly but steadily taken place during the past century between the Church of Sweden and Augustana. In an earlier day a former archbishop¹ had all but disowned those of his countrymen who left the homeland to seek a better life in the new world. And the little immigrant Church which those pioneers had founded in America for many years enjoyed but scant sympathy and recognition from the Swedish hierarchy. Now, however, Augustana received, and with some pride accepted, the accolade

¹ Henrik Reuterdaahl (1795-1870).

of "daughter church." Refreshing winds of mutuality, understanding, and fellowship had been blowing across the broad Atlantic! And from the spokesmen of the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches in the U. S. A., the National Lutheran Council, and from sister synods came expressions of fraternal good will, acclaiming the role of Augustana as an active member of the world-wide family of Protestant Christianity. Behind all such expressions lay the story of the pilgrimage of an immigrant church which had succeeded in establishing itself as a positive Christian force in the midst of the bewildering complexities of a religiously pluralistic and competitive society. Fraternal relationships had been formed at home and abroad within the framework of an ecumenical spirit singularly free from sectarian exclusiveness.

And there was significance, too, in the absence of certain representations which might well have been expected at the Centennial Service. To be sure, there was a cordial greeting from the president of the Missouri Synod who voiced the hope that total Lutheran unity in America might some day eventuate on the basis of "solid foundations." But from the ultra-right wing of Lutheranism there was no representative and no word of felicitation. Augustana had long ago determined that its future course should lie neither to the right nor to the left, but as near the midstream of confessional Lutheranism as possible.

If the Centennial Service may, then, stand as a kind of symbol of the transformation which has occurred within the Augustana Church over the span of a century, it is appropriate to observe that the outcome of any development is to a large extent determined by the elements which were present at the beginning. The evolution of any organism must be perceived in terms of the interplay between the original components of the organism and the environment in which it has existed. It is therefore both proper and necessary to ask: What were the ingredients that characterized the little immigrant church that originated at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, a century ago? What was the nature of its legacy? What effects has the American environment had upon this legacy? A brief survey of the historical setting will help to provide a general framework and necessary perspective for at least partial answers to such questions and a better understanding of the unfolding story of Augustana in America.

The European Background

The Augustana Lutheran Church has embodied and represented the essentials of the Swedish tradition of the Lutheran Church in the religious life of America. The roots of Augustana are deeply imbedded in the soil of Sweden, and though there may be some argument about whether or not Augustana may properly be called the "daughter" of the Church of Sweden, there can be no argument or doubt as to the vital relationship between the two and the significant contributions which a Swedish heritage has made to Augustana and, through it, to America.

At the time the Augustana Church was organized, the Swedish realm was undergoing a profound change. Indeed, the nineteenth century was a time of immense upheaval and transition for all of Scandinavia. It marked the period of the modernization of Sweden and her neighbors, when virtually the entire national life experienced a transformation from a rural to an urbanized society.²

Although the modernization of Sweden eventually touched the total Swedish population, it was the lower, underprivileged rural classes that first felt the pinch of national dislocation. The small landholders, the crofters and farm day laborers had never enjoyed either cultural and social status or economic security. For generations they had been compelled to accept an inferior station in Swedish life. But when the new liberalism of the nineteenth century with its broad program of reform began to sweep across the nation, it awakened a new and deepened spirit of discontent and unrest among the humble classes of the land. Indeed, the very climate of the times stimulated in them a new self-consciousness and the resolve to seek a future somewhere on earth where the right of self-determination would be unrestricted by ancient custom and tradition.³

At the same time as Sweden was being swept by cultural, political, and economic upheavals, the people were also being deeply stirred by religious revivals. In fact, revivalism may be said to have been the spiritual phase of the movement for the renewal of Swed-

² G. Everett Arden, *The School of the Prophets*, Rock Island, Ill., 1960, Chapters I-V, pp. 3-57. Eli F. Heckscher, *Svenskt arbete och liv*, Stockholm, 1942, see Chapter V, "Det moderna Sveriges grundläggning," pp. 167-272, and Chapter VI, "Det stora genombrottet," pp. 273-356. A. A. Stromberg, *A History of Sweden*, New York, 1931, Chapters XXIII and XXIV, pp. 616-679.

³ Ingvar Anderson, *Sveriges historia*, Stockholm, 1953, pp. 238ff. See also *Emigrationsutredningen*, Bilaga IX, pp. 26ff, and Bilaga VIII, pp. 31ff. F. Thorelius, *Försök till fullständiga upplysningar om läseriet; till tjänst för sanningens vänner*, Stockholm, 1868, pp. 11ff.

ish life, even though the earliest beginnings of revivalism antedate the modernization of the nation. And there is little doubt that religion in nineteenth-century Sweden needed revival and renewal. The National Church had absorbed elements of rationalism, secularism, and formalism. By reason of its close political ties with the State, the Church often found it difficult to maintain the kind of freedom which would enable it to live close to the common people. Political consideration, local as well as national, rather than the spiritual needs of the people, frequently determined ecclesiastical attitudes and action. The clergy, supported by public taxation imposed by the State, were so often preoccupied with the details of official record keeping and government reports that they had little time for real pastoral care. Furthermore, especially in the far-flung rural areas, the parishes were so extensive and the distances so great that it was difficult for pastors to visit their people, or for the people to attend public worship with any regularity.⁴

It was in the midst of such circumstances that the revivals began. Out in the rural districts humble folk would gather in their cottages to read the Bible together, and to share the devotional writings of the great Lutheran church fathers, Luther, Arndt, and others. They would read the prayers and confessions from the liturgy of the Church, and conclude by calling down the benediction of God upon themselves, their pastor, and their church. It was a quiet movement among the lay folk. Many parish pastors heartily approved these cottage meetings. In the latter decades of the eighteenth century, Moravian missionaries visited Sweden and succeeded in permeating this type of *Old Lutheranism* with the quickening spirit of *Pietism*, with its emphasis upon the emotional and subjective aspects of Christian experience and the ethical and moral demands of sanctification.⁵

During the first half of the nineteenth century several outstanding personalities appeared who gave new impetus to the religious awakening. *Henric Schartau* (1757-1825), who for forty years was pastor in the university city of Lund, exerted a widespread influence in southern and western Sweden. He was a staunch churchman who opposed the emotional and subjective emphases in reli-

⁴ Hilding Pleijel, *Herrnhutism i sydsverige*, Lund, 1925, pp. 42ff. Nils Rodin, *Det Norrländska nyläseriets uppkomst*, Stockholm, 1942, preface and introduction. See also Carl Edquist, *Läseriet i Skelleftebygden under 1800 talet*, Stockholm, 1917, pp. 9ff. John Holmgren, *Norrlandsläseriet*, Stockholm, 1948, pp. 89ff.

⁵ F. Thorelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 2ff. Allen Sandewall, "Herrnhutismens betydelse för norrlandsläseriet," *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift*, 1948, p. 145. Ernst Newman, *Nordskånska väckelserörelser under 1800-talet*, Stockholm, 1925, pp. 8ff, 73f.

gion, and stressed instead the role which man's mind and understanding must play in Christian life. He sought to educate his people in Christian fundamentals by clear, expository sermons and penetrating catechetical classes, while he fostered good churchmanship by careful use of the prescribed liturgical and ceremonial forms.⁶

Toward the close of Schartau's ministry a similar movement began in the province of Småland, led by two earnest pastors, *Peter Lorents Sellergren* (1769-1843) and *Pehr Nyman* (1794-1856). Though each of these men labored independently of the other, they both represented an extension of the Schartau revival. Each man, however, added his own stamp of genius to his work. Like Schartau, their fundamental message had a strong note of the law, stressing the moral demands of a holy God. But they differed from Schartau in that they underlined the need for a personal experience of conversion rather than an intellectual understanding of Christian doctrine.⁷

While Sellergren and Nyman were laboring in the southern and central sections of the land, other revival fires were being ignited far to the north in Swedish Lappland, near the Finnish border. The leader here was the strange and eccentric pastor, *Lars Levi Laestadius* (1800-1861). Although this movement developed some unusual practices, such as ecstatic trances, lively dances, and public confession of individual sins, the main emphasis of Laestadius was upon the moral regeneration of the people. Doctrinally and theologically, Laestadius was a loyal Lutheran. Other revivals, led by men like Jacob Otto Hoof, Frederick Gabriel Hedberg and Carl Johann Nyvall, were of more limited scope and significance, but served, nevertheless, to add to the nation-wide sweep of the movement.⁸

Closely associated with revivalism was the Temperance Movement and the Swedish Tract Society. The cause of temperance was headed by *Peter Wieselgren* (1800-1877), for many years the Dean

⁶ Pleijel, *op. cit.*, p. 264f. Gottfrid Billing, *Henric Schartau, Minnesteckning*, Lund, 1914. Henri Hägglund, *Henric Schartau till hundraårsminnet*, Stockholm, 1912. Victor Södergren, *Henric Schartau och västsvenskt kyrkoliv*, Uppsala, 1925.

⁷ For brief sketches of these religious leaders see, *Korsblomman*, 1878, "De andliga rörelserna i Småland," pp. 43ff. For the influence of the Swedish revivalists upon Augustana leaders see, Nils Forsander, *Lifsbilder*, Rock Island, 1915, pp. 9ff.

⁸ For a general survey of the revival movement in Sweden see E. J. Ekman, *Inre missionens historia*, first unabridged edition, 3 vols. Stockholm, 1896. See also Nils Forsander, "Religious Thought and Movements of the Church of Sweden during the 19th Century," *Tidskrift*, 1900, p. 32f.

of the Cathedral in Gothenberg. In his own parish Wieselgren formed a local temperance society pledged to total abstinence which became the model for hundreds of similar societies throughout the land. Traveling up and down Sweden, Wieselgren spent his best energies for many years urging upon his countrymen the blessings and benefits of sobriety and self-respect. In this national campaign he allied himself and his cause with the evangelical revivals, for he saw temperance as the moral concomitant of spiritual revival and Christian commitment. The Tract Society enjoyed the support of virtually all revival preachers, but no man gave it greater leadership than P. A. Ahlberg (1823-1887), able pastor and educator. He may be thought of as the prime advocate and trainer of Swedish colportage. As the head of the Fjellstedt school in Uppsala, and later the founder of his own mission school at Ahlsborg, in the province of Småland, he sought to prepare men for evangelistic work in the church at home and abroad, and encouraged a number of his students to join the pioneer ranks of the young Augustana Church in America.⁹

Up until about 1820 there was no one man in Sweden who provided the kind of inspiring leadership which could pull all these diverse revival movements together and give a cohesiveness and unified thrust to the movement as a whole. That year, however, such a man appeared in the person of George Scott, an English Methodist missionary who established his headquarters in Stockholm. Scott, who learned to speak fluent Swedish, combined in his ministry an interest in both revivalism and temperance, and traveled to all parts of Sweden, speaking to great throngs of people, quickly becoming the most prominent evangelist in the land. There soon gathered around him practically all the outstanding revival preachers and temperance advocates, and thus he succeeded in bringing a real sense of unity into the entire evangelical movement.

Scott represented almost a traditional pietistic approach to religion. Though he was a Methodist, he did not seek to convert his Swedish audiences to the Methodist viewpoint. He simply urged upon his hearers the necessity of repentance for sin, faith in Jesus Christ as savior, and a thoroughgoing amendment of life. He was not so much interested in doctrine as in the sanctification of life. Scott's church in Stockholm, the Bethlehem chapel, became the main hub for revival and temperance activity and propaganda, and people

⁹ Sigfried Wieselgren, *Peter Wieselgren: en levnadsteckning*, Stockholm, 1900. For a brief sketch of Ahlberg see Ekman, *Inre missionens historia*, pp. 348-352, and Korsblomman, *op. cit.*

from near and far, representing all classes, flocked to Scott's headquarters to counsel with him about their spiritual needs.¹⁰

One of those who sought Scott's guidance was a young, bewildered theological student from Uppsala University, who was struggling to find peace with God and an answer to his religious doubts. That young man was *Carl Olof Rosenius* (1816-1868). Through the ministry of Scott, Rosenius was brought to spiritual clarity and an unshakable faith in God and His Word. He soon became the intimate friend and most trusted helper of Scott. When Scott left Sweden and returned to England in 1842, his mantle of leadership fell upon Rosenius, who was destined to become one of the greatest religious leaders in the history of the Swedish people.

Like all the great revival preachers of his day Rosenius was critical of the spiritual conditions existing in the National Church. Indeed, he held the Church to be so worldly and indifferent that he refused to be ordained into its ministry, and spent his life as a lay evangelist. And yet he loved the Church and insisted that any renewal of Swedish religious life must come from within the Church, and that separatism could only hinder and delay renewal. Furthermore, a revival of true Christian faith and life must be the result, not of human effort, but of the power of the gospel. To bring the gospel to bear upon the life of every individual and every community, a new interest in the Bible must be awakened throughout the land. For it is in the Bible that man discovers God's great message of life and salvation through Jesus Christ. He who believes in Jesus Christ and trusts in Him for the forgiveness of sins is saved from the bondage of sin and is set free for service in God's kingdom. Such service involves a concern for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the neighbor and sanctifies every human relationship with the loving spirit of Jesus.¹¹

The Christian life, Rosenius insisted, involves anguish and struggle. The law plunges the sinner into despair and compels him to seek release at the cross of Christ. But even so, the old sinful nature is not dead, but must be curbed and denied in daily warfare against all temptation. As long as such warfare continues, there remains the assurance of the Holy Spirit's presence. But the struggle

¹⁰ The most definitive work on the life, work and influence of George Scott is Gunnar Westin, *George Scott och hans verksamhet i Sverige*, Stockholm, 1929.

¹¹ C. O. Rosenius, *Pietisten, nytt och gammalt från nådens rike*, First ed., Stockholm, 1877, section entitled, "Den kristlige kärleken," pp. 73ff. See also C. O. Rosenius, *The Believer Free from the Law*, tr. Adolf Hult, Rock Island, Ill., 1923.

must be waged earnestly with no compromise. The pleasures and standards of the world must be rejected, and obedience must be given to the divine injunction, "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).¹²

Rosenius published a newspaper, *Pietisten*, which enjoyed a wide circulation and gave the revival movement a clear voice which spoke to the religious and spiritual needs of the whole nation. His message was given the wings of song and music as Mrs. C. O. Berg, under her maiden name of Lina Sandell, composed and published a number of hymns which breathed the spirit of Rosenius and helped spread his views among old and young.

And second in importance only to Rosenius himself was *Peter Fjellstedt* (1802-1881), renowned preacher, writer, and linguist, who has been called "The Passavant of Sweden," because of his work on behalf of social and foreign missions. As an outspoken champion of the evangelical revival, Fjellstedt conceived his mission to be that of an educator of men and women who would devote their lives primarily to the missionary cause. To this end he established the Fjellstedt school, located first at Lund, then at Stockholm and finally at Uppsala, where it continues its work today. No man in Sweden followed the course of events in America relating to the Augustana Church with greater interest and concern than Peter Fjellstedt. To him the people of Augustana turned again and again for help and encouragement.¹³

This line of development, beginning with Schartau and extending through the ministry of Rosenius, may be said to mark the mainstream of the evangelical revival in Sweden. In many respects it was to the Church of Sweden what puritanism in an earlier age had been to the Church of England. Fundamentally, it represented Swedish dissent, in the sense that it was critical of the established Church, though not antichurch; it was generally opposed to the political connection between Church and State; it was suspicious of the spiritual life of much of the official clergy; it encouraged the exercise of religion outside of official ecclesiastical supervision; it favored lay preaching and evangelism; it was often, though not always, low church in its freedom regarding the use of prescribed liturgical and ceremonial

¹² Gustaf Brandt, *C. O. Rosenii förkunnelse*, Stockholm, 1918, pp. 208ff. C. O. Rosenius, *A Faithful Guide to Peace with God*, Excerpts from the writings of C. O. Rosenius, ed. Bishop N. J. Laache, Minneapolis, Minn., 1923.

¹³ For a brief sketch of Fjellstedt see Ekman, *Inre missionens historia*, op. cit., pp. 299-325. For excerpts from his correspondence which reveal his interest regarding Augustana see Emelia Ahnfelt-Laurin, *Peter Fjellstedt, hans verksamhet i fosterlandet mellan åren 1843-1881*, Stockholm, 1881.

forms. It was Biblical and confessional, holding to the basic principles and truths of historic Lutheranism, though the approach to religion was, on the whole, pietistic in the sense that it was subjective rather than objective, stressing the emotional aspects of a personal experience of conversion; it was moralistic, indeed, often puritanical and legalistic, in its insistence upon sanctification as corollary with justification in terms of a disciplined self-denying amendment of life. It conceived of Christianity as *praxis* rather than as intellectual assent to dogma and doctrine. But in all of this the mainstream of the evangelical movement *was not separatistic*. The outstanding leaders conceived their mission to be the renewal of religion *from within* the Church, and they decried any attempts to disrupt the life of the National Church through schism or rupture.

Another significant feature of this mainstream tradition was its singular lack of narrow sectarianism. This may well have been partly due to the fact that the movement had been initiated by non-Lutherans in a Lutheran land, first by Moravians and then encouraged and promoted by George Scott the Methodist from England, and Robert Baird, the Presbyterian advocate of temperance from America. In any event, whether we search the works of Schartau or Rosenius, or any of their contemporaries who were seeking to renew the religious life of Sweden, we seek almost in vain for the kind of religious exclusiveness which slams the door of Christian mutuality and fellowship in the face of all but those who share the particular viewpoint of the evangelist. The great Swedish revivalists did indeed seek to inculcate a sound Biblical, confessionally grounded Lutheranism in the hearts of their countrymen, but they did not thereby deny the name of Christian to all others but themselves. There was a kind of broadminded, charitable tolerance among them, an ecumenical spirit, which recognized and acknowledged the diversity of the Holy Spirit's gifts of speech and insight. In fact, the revival movement was often so non-sectarian that, on occasion, its detractors accused the leaders of theological obscurantism. Rosenius was especially assailed on this point.

By 1856 the mood and spirit of this mainstream of Swedish dissent had crystallized to the extent that it was institutionalized in the formation, that year, of the *National Evangelical Foundation* (Evan geliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen). Under the auspices of this organization over-all direction was given to the revival and temperance movement throughout the land, devotional literature and portions of the Scriptures were published and distributed, lay evangelists and colporteurs were trained and sent out, and missionary projects of various kinds

set in motion and given both moral and financial support. The goal and purpose of the Foundation was, and has continued to be, the encouragement of a vital, personalized, practical kind of Christianity within the Swedish Church and nation. As such, the Foundation has looked upon itself as an arm of the National Church, supplementing but not supplanting its work. It must be admitted, however, that this arm has often functioned with singular independence from the body of which it is intended to be a part.¹⁴

But any movement with as much dynamic vitality as the revival movement possessed was bound to develop pockets of radicalism. The radical wing of Swedish dissent grew slowly. In the early decades of the nineteenth century it appeared to be nothing more serious than the left wing of the emerging revivals. But in time, as tension mounted between the dissenters and the official Church, prophets arose who not only criticised the lack of spiritual vitality in the Church, but who attacked the doctrinal position of Lutheranism, particularly the doctrines of the Church and the sacraments. The radicals generally held that the Church must be a "gathered society" of the converted and saved and the sacraments must be administered by and reserved for the converted worthy alone. Frequently, infant baptism was rejected as lacking sufficient Scriptural warrant. Christian certainty was grounded in a particular kind of emotional experience, and an extreme puritanism regarding "worldly pleasures" was demanded.¹⁵

By the fourth decade semi-independent societies began to appear, prayer chapels were erected, and religious services, including Holy Communion, were held without benefit of the official clergy. Thus, the radicals developed separatist tendencies. These people were becoming convinced that the National Church was so secularized and corrupt, and Lutheranism itself so untenable, that the only way to safeguard and maintain true spirituality was to separate and break away from a form of religion so unacceptable to "true Christians." The first open rupture, however, did not occur until 1848, when an independent congregation was organized in the Norrland village of Luleå. From here it soon spread to other sections of the country. It was the separatist strain of Swedish dissent that created a favorable climate for the proselyting efforts of non-Lutherans in Sweden. When Baptist, Methodist, and even Mormon missionaries appeared

¹⁴ B. Wadström, *Ur minnet och dagboken, anteckningar från åren 1848-1897*, Stockholm, 1897, 1889, I, pp. 251ff. See also Eskil Levander, *Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen genom 75 år*, Vols. I and II, Stockholm, 1931, I, p. 36f.

¹⁵ For a critical survey of Swedish separatism see Allan Sandewall, *Separatism i övre Norrland, 1820-1855*, Uppsala, 1952.

with their blasts against the Lutheran Church they found among the separatists a ready and eager audience. To the far left separatism developed extreme forms such as the Eric Jansonites who ultimately shook the dust of "Babylon" from their sandals, immigrated to America and founded a communistic colony in Bishop Hill, Illinois.¹⁶

Finally, it must be remembered that there were large numbers of Swedish folk who remained relatively unmoved and untouched by the winds of change and the clash of party strife. These were the humble, faithful flock who loved their Church as a child loves its mother. Though they may have heard the revival preachers and listened to the strange prophets who were abroad in the land, they remained loyal to the old Church. They were not prepared to argue the fine points of doctrine or take sides in debate; they were simply content to hear the gospel preached as they had been accustomed, and to apply its precepts as best they could to the homely, banal, everyday problems of life. There may have been aspects about the Church which did not wholly satisfy them, but these were overlooked. The dearest and most cherished memories they had were associated with the altar, the communion rail, the baptismal font, the pulpit, and the quiet churchyard of their parish church. Their earthly possessions were perhaps meager, but among the household items most frequently used, besides the blackened coffee pot, were the family Bible, the old Psalmbook, and a postil or two of sermons.¹⁷

Swedish Immigration

It was into this turbulent little country of Sweden that emigration reached a long arm and transferred hundreds of thousands of Swedish nationals to the United States during the nineteenth century.¹⁸ And it is important for us to understand the relationship between the process of immigration and the history of the Augustana

¹⁶ Emil Herlenius, *Erik-Jansismen i Sverige*, Bidrag till svenska sektväsendets historia, Uppsala, 1897, pp. 19ff. See also Michael A. Mikkelsen, *The Bishop Hill Colony; A religious communistic settlement in Henry County, Illinois*, Baltimore, 1892.

¹⁷ S. G. Hägglund, "Types of Piety in the Augustana Synod," *Augustana Quarterly*, December, 1928.

¹⁸ In the half-century from 1860 to 1910, Swedish emigration to the U. S. totaled 933,958, including 523,920 men and 410,038 women, *Emigrationsutredningen*, Bilaga XX, p. 114, Table 14. It must be remembered, however, that neither Swedish nor American figures pertaining to Swedish emigration or immigration are entirely accurate. Nor do the above figures indicate the number of Swedes who returned to Sweden.

Church. And so the question arises: Who were these immigrants? What section of the Swedish population did they represent?

The process of emigration was, in certain respects, selective. The privileged classes of Swedish society, the culturally sophisticated, the economically secure, and the politically powerful were content to stay where they were. They were, so to speak, the beneficiaries of the *status quo*. It was those who felt the pinch of the current dislocations and inequities that ventured to break the tender ties of home and family and strike out across the vast ocean for the new world. Up until 1880, the majority of Swedish emigrants were recruited from the humbler, lower-class rural segments of the population, because it was this part of the social structure which first felt the impact of national change and transition, and for whom a change of environment seemed most desirable. According to official government records, during the latter half of the nineteenth century the rural districts of Sweden contributed more than five and a half times as many emigrants as any other social section.¹⁹ For these farm folk the free land policy in the United States held out a most attractive hope for a more secure and abundant future. Thus, it was natural that they would seek to settle in those regions where free land was most readily available, and where geographical and climatic conditions were most favorable. This is the reason that the swarming of the Swedes was concentrated in the upper Mississippi Valley, which therefore marks the section of the United States where the major events in the history of Augustana have occurred.

The democratic social order which prevailed in America was also an appealing attraction to the humble classes in Sweden who yearned for an opportunity to exercise a greater measure of political and social freedom. In America there were no class distinctions, and every man was at liberty to act as a free man and walk among his neighbors as a peer and equal.

These two features of American life, free land and a democratic order, were, accordingly, strong determining factors in drawing masses of Swedish Nationals to the United States. The free land enabled them to find economic security and avoid economic class stratification. The democratic order permitted them to associate with and integrate into the community without having to contend with inherited class dis-

¹⁹ *Emigrationsutredningen*, Bilaga IV, Tables 92-102. For an excellent bibliography concerning the various aspects of Swedish emigration to America and the relationships of the immigrant to life in the new world see O. F. Ander, *The Cultural Heritage of the Swedish Immigrant*, Rock Island, 1956.

tinctions or restrictive class legislation, and so avoiding being forced into political or racial minority groups. All of this enabled the immigrant to express his own genius and to maintain and develop his own religious faith in his own way.

It should further be noted that the process of emigration was selective, too, in the sense that the great preponderance of those who responded to the appeal were young people in the best and most vigorous years of life. This was natural, since the sheer physical effort involved in emigration, the trials and hazards of ocean travel, the exposure to contagious diseases and contaminated food and water, and the exertions required for the journey inland to the Midwest, usually excluded the aged and the infirm. Furthermore, the old folks had deeper roots in the homeland. Though poverty and uncertainty might well be their lot, it seemed a lesser gamble to hold fast what little they presently had than to risk the remaining years in an uncertain venture so far away. The young people, however, faced the necessity of striking down roots where there was a richer promise of reward than the homeland seemed to offer. Then too, the prospect of adventure, the challenge of a brighter tomorrow, the urge to pit themselves against the odds, this was enough in itself to appeal to the vigorous the strong, and the resourceful. Government records indicate that during the years of greatest emigration there were about three and a half times as many Swedish citizens between the ages of twenty and thirty who left the homeland for the United States of America as in any other age category.²⁰

When we think of the founders of Augustana, we so easily envisage a company of aged men and women tired and worn, from whom time had drained away the best energies of life. On the contrary, they were mostly young people, full of enthusiasm, willing to learn the new ways of America, eager to pit their strength against the formidable forces of the frontier, and determined to carve for themselves an honorable niche in the new world. They were not rich or wealthy in worldly possessions, to be sure, but neither were they paupers, for it took some substance to pay for ocean passage and the overland trip to the west. Many may have been broke by the time they reached their destination, but they depended for the future on their own resources of strength, fortitude, and patience, undergirded by the help

²⁰ *Statistisk årsbok för Sverige*, 1927, Tables 63 and 64. See also *Emigrationsutredningen*, Bilaga IV, p. 51. John S. Lindberg, *The Background of Swedish Emigration to the U. S.; An Economic and Sociological Study in the Dynamics of Migration*, Minneapolis, 1930.

of God. A hundred years ago there were no government doles or subsidies to see a man through a lean year; he was expected to stand on his own feet.

Among these thousands of Swedish immigrants, who were they that responded to the appeal to organize in America a Swedish Lutheran Church? What elements did they represent and what spiritual legacy did they embody? We need only remind ourselves that those who were indifferent or hostile to religion would exclude themselves. There were, unfortunately, many in this category. In many cases church membership at home had been so nominal and tenuous that it was easy to leave behind any religious interest which once might have been professed. In other cases, there was open hostility to both church and religion, since to many Swedes the Church represented a reactionary institution which sided with the *status quo* and resisted change, progress, and advancement. Such people preferred to find their fellowship in the lodges and fraternal societies which flourished everywhere in America. The separatists, likewise, were not likely to be drawn to an institution which reminded them, all too keenly, of the Church and the forms of religion which they had found unacceptable at home. These either formed their own communions, such as the Eric Janson colony at Bishop Hill, or they joined existing non-Lutheran denominations, especially the Methodist and Baptist churches.

The extent to which indifferentism and separatism had infected the Swedes who came to America is reflected in the fact that in 1870 there were approximately 97,000 Swedish nationals in the United States. Of this number the Augustana Church had succeeded in winning only a little over 19,000. Although this was, by all odds, the largest percentage of Swedish-Americans affiliated with any one organization in the new world, it is nevertheless an indication of the failure of Augustana to attract more than a fraction of Swedish newcomers. Such failure was due, in part no doubt, to the lack of adequate resources of men and means. But the prevailing spirit of indifference, hostility, and suspicion among large numbers of Swedish immigrants made the task of recruitment all the more difficult and discouraging.²¹

That leaves us with the right-wing dissenters and the flock of faithful Old Lutherans, and it is indeed from among these that the recruits for the Augustana Church in America were drawn. Old Lu-

²¹ Olga M. Wold, *The History of the Augustana Church, 1860-1870*, unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1927, pp. 6ff. See also George M. Stephenson, "Hemlandet Letters," *Yearbook of the Swedish Historical Society of America*, 1922-'23, pp. 33-40.

theranism informed and impregnated with right-wing dissent was the religious tradition, the spiritual legacy, of those who formed the rank and file of the founders of Augustana and who determined its course for the future. It was this spirit they breathed, these ideals they professed, and this brand of religion they wished to transplant and preserve in their new homeland. Lars Paul Esbjörn, pioneer and founding father, and T. N. Hasselquist, patriarchal leader until his death in 1891, embodied this heritage and expressed it in their ministry. They called to aid them in their American mission such men from Sweden as shared their views and spirit. In this country they aligned themselves and their congregations with other Lutherans who seemed to them to be of kindred heart and mind.

When such alignments were no longer compatible with the basic premises of this Scandinavian tradition, the ties were broken and new ones formed. Furthermore, the help and encouragement which Augustana received from Sweden in the early, hard years came, not from the official hierarchy of the established Church, but from like-minded Christian individuals, and from the institution of Swedish dissent, the National Evangelical Foundation. Let it also be said that, if there has been over the past century any single factor which has proven decisive in the creation and maintenance of what might be called an *Augustana ethos*, it is this tradition, this legacy that combines the steady faith of Old Lutheranism with the activism and spontaneity of right-wing Swedish dissent.

The American Environment

Regarding the molding pressures of the American environment upon this tradition and spiritual legacy, H. Richard Niebuhr, in *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*,²² has pointed out that what free land and a democratic order meant for the immigrants' economic and political future in America, the principle of the separation of Church and State meant for their religious future.

The Swedish immigrant came from a country in which Lutheranism was established by law as the official religion of the realm, and the Lutheran Church was protected and supported by the State. The clergy of the National Church received their salaries by public taxation collected by the State, and every citizen, by reason of his citizenship, was born into fellowship with the Church.

Here in America, however, the immigrant met a new, different

²² Reprint edition, Hamden, Conn., 1954, p. 201.

and bewildering environment. Here no church enjoyed the privileges of establishment, and every religion, and all churches, were both unprotected and unmolested by the civil government. As a consequence, every religious group in the country was free to maintain and develop its own faith in its own way, but it must do so in a highly competitive situation. Here every religious institution was strictly on its own, since there were no guarantees undergirding its future well-being. Each was free to poach on the precincts of another, proselyting wherever possible, and gaining advantage over rival groups by whatever means the laws of the land and the restrictions of conscience would allow. In some respects it must have seemed to many a newcomer to these shores that he had suddenly been plunged into a kind of religious jungle where survival depended upon the law of tooth and claw.

In the history of Augustana three effects eventuate from this free but highly competitive American environment. The first effect was *differentiation*, that is the effort to distinguish, clarify, particularize, and assert those elements in the religious tradition of these Swedish-Americans that were characteristic of the group mind. Differentiation, in this sense, makes for group self-consciousness and thus guards against both fragmentation and easy assimilation; it insulates and therefore isolates the group against disintegration, absorption, and eventual extinction. Differentiation exposes and underlines that which makes the group, at least in its own mind, distinctive, and which must, therefore, be preserved in order to be transmitted.

In the following chapters, as the story of Augustana unfolds, the process of differentiation will appear as a painful, disillusioning experience for the pioneer forefathers. It required a new appraisal of basic premises, a deeper and more profound understanding of theological affirmations, a new appreciation of the dangers and difficulties inherent in a pluralistic and free-church society, and a vigorous defense against former friends and erstwhile allies. Indeed, it was the need to differentiate their own religious tradition, in contrast to both the prevailing non-Lutheran Reformed and sectarian majority, on the one hand, and the theologically liberal Lutheranism of the General Synod, on the other hand, which prompted and motivated the fathers to establish the Augustana Church as an independent religious body in America.

A second effect eventuating from the American situation has been *accommodation*, that is, the process by which the Church had adjusted to its environment, adapting its own life and tradition to the context

in which it must live and have its being. Neither individuals nor churches exist in a vacuum; even the most rigid isolation can be but partially successful. To say that accommodation has occurred within a church body is simply to recognize that the group has lived in a dynamic, growing situation in which the interplay with environment is inevitable.

It is in the process of accommodation that the factors of change, modification, and compromise become operative since environment is never static, and the shifts of circumstances demand changes and modifications of old attitudes and programs, adoption of new viewpoints and techniques, the creation of new strategies, and the establishment of new and more effective agencies of propaganda and control. This is imperative if an institution is to influence environment rather than being dominated by it.

However, in the interplay between the dynamic factors of environment and the differentiated premises of a tradition, tensions will inevitably arise which threaten disruption and schism. Perhaps the most notable example of such tension was the crisis which developed during the Waldenström controversy when Augustana was charged with having become theologically unsound regarding the doctrine of the atonement, hierarchical and authoritarian in polity, and too Americanized with respect to the Scandinavian heritage. The consequence of this crisis was the defection of a large number of members and a few congregations and the formation, in 1885, of the *Swedish Mission Covenant Church of America*.

It is perhaps through the process of accommodation that Augustana has matured. Over the past century it developed a profile with distinct and positive lineaments as it continued a steady search for its own place in American religious life where it could thrive, serve, and achieve. Confronted by a constantly changing and expanding community, it sought to remain faithful to the basic premises of its heritage in the development of an over-all posture expressive of its genius, while creating new methods, machinery, and service agencies commensurate with community needs.

Through *differentiation* and *accommodation* the Augustana Church has achieved *identification*. *Identification* in this sense means the establishment of ultimate relationships expressive of fundamental character. A free church in a free and competitive society is sooner or later compelled to determine where it shall stand, what it shall represent, and with whom it shall be associated. The alternate choices are, of course, numerous, but no church has ever been able to be all

things to all men everywhere and forever. At various points along the way there are forks in the road, and decisions must be made regarding which way to turn and where to proceed. And in the long run a pattern of action will emerge which expresses and embodies, even as it at the same time helps to mold, the very character and spirit of those who exercise the choices.

Seed Time

THE SWEDISH IMMIGRANTS who came to America during the nineteenth century and founded a Lutheran Church in this country were not blazing an entirely new trail. In reality they were following in the footsteps of earlier generations of Swedes who had preceded them to these shores. Except for the queer twists of history, the story of the Augustana Church may well have had its first setting in the early seventeenth century along the eastern seaboard instead of in the mid-nineteenth century and the Mississippi Valley.

The Delaware Episode

It was in the month of March, 1638, that two Swedish ships, chartered by a Swedish commercial company and loaded with people and supplies, dropped anchor some two miles up the Delaware river and sent scouting parties ashore to survey the area. Land on both sides of the Delaware was purchased from friendly Indian chiefs, and on the site where Wilmington, Delaware, is now located, the first Swedish colony in America, Fort Christina, was established. With continued immigration during the following years, the colony expanded until it embraced Delaware and parts of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. They called it *New Sweden*. Here, as in Old Sweden, the Lutheran Church was given official recognition and support by the civil government. Lutheran congregations were organized and a full parish program, including worship according to the Swedish rite, was conducted.

To this colony came the first settled Lutheran pastor ever to labor on American soil. His name was Reorus Torkillus, who labored faithfully from 1640 until his death three years later. His successor was John Campanius, who is credited with the distinction of erecting the first Lutheran church building in America, and of translating the first book, *Luther's Small Catechism*, into the language of the American Indian.

For one hundred and ninety-three years a succession of thirty-five clergymen were sent out by the Church of Sweden to minister to the colonists. The last of this intrepid band was the Rev. Nicholas

Collin, who after serving the colony for almost a half century, died in 1831, at the age of eighty-seven years.¹

The Church of Sweden looked upon the church in the American colony as an important mission abroad, and kept it under the closest possible scrutiny and supervision. Instead of encouraging the colonial church to stand on its own feet and develop its own resources, the mother church insisted on exercising strict control over its American outpost. Thus, the church along the Delaware continued to be almost entirely dependent upon Sweden for help and encouragement. But when first the Dutch and then the British took over the Swedish colony, help from the homeland became increasingly difficult to obtain. Finally, the congregations in New Sweden were faced with the alternatives of complete dissolution or finding help elsewhere. They chose the latter course, and since the Episcopal Church was the official church of the British colonies, and sustained cordial relations with the Church of Sweden, the Swedish congregations, one by one, affiliated with this denomination. Shortly after the death of Pastor Collin, the last of the Lutheran congregations along the Delaware joined the Episcopal fold. Two of the churches built by the Swedish Lutherans, Holy Trinity in Wilmington, and Gloria Dei in South Philadelphia, are still being used by present-day Episcopal congregations.

A period of only eighteen years separates the passing of the last pastor of the Delaware Swedes and the arrival of the first pastor, L. P. Esbjörn, who was associated with the new wave of Swedish immigration. But during these eighteen years the last vestiges of a Swedish Lutheran tradition in America had virtually disappeared, and the newcomers of the nineteenth century were compelled to begin their work anew. The annals of Swedish Lutheranism in America would doubtless be far different, had Pastor Esbjörn and his colleagues been able to connect their labors with an ongoing Swedish Lutheran Church in America which reached back to the earliest days of the colonial period. The big difference between these two episodes in the history of Swedish-American Lutheranism is the contrast of relationship which the hierarchy of the Church of Sweden sustained toward these American ventures. The Delaware enterprise, which was a colonial undertaking, was so closely linked to the mother church that it was never permitted

¹ Otto Norberg, *Svenska kyrkans mission vid Delaware i Nord Amerika*, Stockholm, 1843. T. C. Clay, *Annals of the Swedes on the Delaware, From Their First Settlements in 1636 to the Present Time*, 2nd Ed., Philadelphia, 1858. See also Amandus Johnson, *The Swedes in America, 1638-1900*, Vol. I, Philadelphia, 1914. Adolph Benson and Naboth Hedin, *Swedes in America, 1638-1938*, New Haven, 1938.

to become a really indigenous operation in this country, and finally withered away. The latter undertaking, which was an immigrant venture, was "unofficial," an independent affair, free from outside control, and thus compelled to find its own resources and make its own way. But this very freedom and independence became the matrix of future permanence and stability.

Swedish Settlers of the Nineteenth Century

Though Swedish immigration to America dwindled to almost nothing after New Sweden passed from Swedish control, nevertheless, each year found a few Swedish nationals coming to this country. The great migration, however, did not begin until about 1840. Among the earlier arrivals who were already on hand to greet and direct the incoming masses were such men as the Hedstrom brothers, Olof G. and Jonas J. They had been converted to the Methodist faith and began their work as Methodist missionaries among Scandinavians in America as early as 1833. For thirty years Olof Gustaf Hedstrom was pastor of the "Bethel Ship," a schooner converted into a harbor mission in New York City. He would meet the incoming ships, invite the bewildered people to his mission, preach to them the comforting gospel according to the Methodist viewpoint, and counsel them regarding conditions in America. His brother Jonas settled in Victoria, Illinois, and labored in these frontier regions as a traveling Methodist missionary. He reported to his brother in New York the latest frontier news, keeping him informed about the situation in the Midwest. These two men, Olof and Jonas Hedstrom, were responsible, not only for winning many Swedish immigrants for the Methodist cause, but also for directing the mainstream of Swedish immigration into the upper Mississippi valley.²

Another early arrival was Gustaf Unonius, a clerk in the provincial land office at Uppsala, who also became a notable figure among Swedish-Americans. With his young bride and a few friends, he came to America in 1841, and settled at Pine Lake, Wisconsin. Here he became associated with the Episcopalians, joined their church, was ordained into the Episcopal ministry, and spent seventeen years as an Episcopalian missionary among the Swedes. His congregation in Chicago, Illinois, was the first Swedish Episcopal Church in the United

² Eric Norelius, *De svenska luterska församlingarnas och svenskarnes historia i Amerika*, Rock Island, Illinois, 1890, Vol. I, pp. 16-23. See also N. M. Liljegren, N. O. Westergren and C. G. Wallenius, *Svenska Metodismen i Amerika*, Chicago, 1895.

States, and the center of his ministerial activities. Visiting Swedish settlements in all parts of the Middle West, Unonius invited his countrymen to join the Episcopal Church, claiming that the Episcopal Church in America represented the best elements of the Lutheran Church in Sweden without suffering from its faults and defects.³

The first emigrant party of considerable size left Sweden in the summer of 1846, led by the radical separatist, Eric Janson. Possessed of an eccentric character and violent temperament, Janson abandoned his farming in Uppland about 1840, and became a self-appointed lay evangelist and an apostle of radical reform. In crude language and scathing terms he denounced both the Government and the Church of Sweden. He heaped scorn upon the writings of the church fathers held in highest esteem, Luther, Arndt, Nohrborg, and Linderoth. He claimed that God had given him a special revelation which superseded all other truth, and only he was qualified to interpret the true message of the Bible. Those who believed his message were instantly set free from all sin and made perfect in God's eyes; all others were doomed to hell. Janson's vitriolic attacks upon all constituted authority soon brought him into trouble with the law, and he was hounded by the police from place to place, finally escaping across the Norwegian border disguised as a woman. Seeking refuge from his tormentors and persecutors, Janson decided to gather his faithful flock and go to America. His farewell address to his homeland expresses the pent-up bitterness and hatred he felt toward those who dared to oppose him:

Merciful God, open the eyes of Sweden's king that he may see how the devilish teachings of the clergy bring their hearers to the damnation of hell. O Lord of all, lend to the Government light to see the darkness that enshrouds the earth, as related in Isaiah 60, and to see that the devil's preachers have caused darkness to descend over a whole people. . . . Farewell, Sweden's princes and powers that be, who soon enough, as recorded in God's Word, will bite your tongues because of the woe that will overtake you. Farewell, ye ravenous wolves, who have brought Sweden's people to the unfortunate state that they must pay several thousand *riksdaler* to those who reject and banish those who have been faithful to God's commandments. . . . But peace be unto those who have received and do receive him in the name of a prophet.⁴

A scouting party, headed by a certain Olof Olson, had been sent on

³ Gustaf Unonius, *A Pioneer in Northwest America, 1841-1858, The memoirs of Gustaf Unonius*, tr. J. O. Backlund, Vol. I, Minneapolis, 1950. See also Norelius, *Ibid.*, pp. 2ff.

⁴ *Afskedstal, till all Sveriges innewånare, som föraktadt mig, den som Jesus hafwer sändt; eller förkastat det namnet Erik Jansson, Söderala, 1846.*

ahead to prepare for the mass exodus of the Jansonites. Olson conferred with Olof Hedstrom in New York who counseled him to bring his party to Illinois. Thus it was that the Jansonite community settled at Bishop Hill, only a short distance from Victoria, the headquarters of Jonas Hedstrom. From 1846 to 1848 approximately fifteen hundred people, fervent disciples of Janson, left the northern sections of Sweden and came to their "new Jerusalem" on the prairies of Illinois. Among the adherents of Janson were a number of families who had once been members of Pastor Esbjörn's parish in Hälsingland. When the Esbjörn party arrived in New York a few years later, seeking a place to settle, the choice of Andover, Illinois, was due, partly to the advice of Hedstrom, and partly to Esbjörn's desire to win back into the Lutheran fold those of his former members and friends who had abandoned their Lutheran faith to follow the "prophet," because only a few miles separate Andover and Bishop Hill.⁵

Of greater significance to the future Augustana Church was the small immigrant party, headed by Peter Kassel, which set out from Östergötland in 1845, and found its way to Jefferson County in Iowa, some forty-two miles west of Burlington. They settled in a rolling, wooded section along the Skunk River and called their colony *New Sweden*. The first couple of years were hard and lean, many of the original settlers died of exposure and disease, while a few families moved to Burlington. But the survivors persevered and steadily improved their circumstances. They wrote to their friends and relatives back home describing the rich soil, the salubrious climate, and the bright hopes for the future. Soon others joined them, and the colony began to enjoy a modest expansion. But they were in spiritual need. They had neither church nor pastor, but gathered in their homes for quiet devotional periods. One of their number, the community cobbler, Magnus Håkanson, though he had no theological training, was a spiritually minded man who was often called on to lead their cottage meetings. In 1848 the little flock of lay folk urged Håkanson to become their spiritual leader and to function as their pastor. The humble shoemaker demurred, but was finally persuaded to accept the charge. Although no formal organization of the congregation occurred, the people looked upon themselves as a genuine Lutheran congregation; their children were baptized, their youth confirmed, the Lord's Supper was regularly

⁵ For a critical study of the Jansonite story and viewpoint see, Emil Herlenius, *Erik-Jansismens historia*, Jönköping, 1900. See also Eric Johnson and C. F. Peterson, *Svenskarne i Illinois, historiska anteckningar*, Chicago, 1889, pp. 22-54. See also, Norelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 27ff., and Chapter III, pp. 61ff. Michael Mikkelsen, *op. cit.*

celebrated, and worship was conducted according to the Swedish rite.⁶ Here was a functioning Lutheran parish in every important respect, even though Håkanson did not receive an ecclesiastical license until 1850, when such recognition was granted to him by the Joint Synod of Ohio. The community at New Sweden, Iowa, has been acknowledged by the Augustana Church as its first and earliest parish, and the Congregational Centennial of 1948 was celebrated in recognition of this historic fact.⁷

The simple, uncomplicated church life in this layman's venture at New Sweden was not destined to enjoy peace and tranquility for very long. Within a year after Håkanson assumed charge, proselyting missionaries began to appear on the scene. In the summer of 1849 Gustaf Unonius made his way to New Sweden. He was highly critical of what he found there. Håkanson's right to conduct worship and dispense the sacraments without Episcopal sanction was attacked, and the legality of a congregation functioning without a constitution and independent of ecclesiastical ties was questioned. Both Håkanson and his people were charged with sectarianism and separatism, and urged to turn from their improper ways and become respectable Christians by affiliating with the Episcopal Church. Such talk did little more than spread confusion and dismay, and Håkanson thought seriously of resigning and leaving the community.

In the midst of these distractions a letter came from another missionary who promised to visit New Sweden and comfort the people with the true gospel. Shortly thereafter Jonas Hedstrom appeared on the scene, but far from comforting the little flock, he revealed himself as a bitter enemy and critic of the Lutheran Church. He condemned virtually all Lutheran practice, from infant baptism to the funeral rite, including the liturgy and clerical vestments.⁸ Confusion worse confounded now reigned in the settlement. Håkanson endeavored to withstand Hedstrom, but was no match for the fiery apostle of free Methodism. Several leading members of the colony, including Peter Kassel himself, were drawn away from the Lutheran fold. Håkanson in deep distress and discouragement, resigned his charge, but was urged to remain and become a Methodist. When Håkanson suggested that another layman might serve them better, the people held a prayer meeting and, asking God's guidance, drew lots, and the lot fell upon Håkanson.

⁶ Norelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 87ff.

⁷ See President's Report, *Synodical Minutes*, 1948, pp. 16-35.

⁸ Norelius, *op. cit.*, p. 89f.

Accepting this as a sign from God, the distracted Håkanson acceded to the wishes of the people and agreed to remain, but his ministry was now one of perplexed uncertainty.⁹

But an even greater threat to the peace and unity of the colony was soon to confront New Sweden. The Episcopalian onslaughts of Unonius and the Methodist attacks of Hedstrom had been serious enough, but these were mild invasions in comparison to the assaults made by several Baptist missionaries who, one after another, visited the settlement. Two of these Baptist spokesmen, Gustaf Palmquist and F. O. Nilsson, were particularly effective in stirring up strife and winning the confidence of a number of the colony leaders. The chief question which these men raised was the validity of infant baptism. They charged that this rite had no Scriptural basis, and that baptism is a sign and testimony of conversion and faith, and therefore only "believers' baptism" is valid. They pressed their point with such vigor and earnestness that the whole community was thrown into an uproar, and many Lutherans accompanied the missionaries to the nearby river where they were immersed and given "proper and Christian baptism according to the Bible." Even Håkanson was momentarily carried away by the zeal of the Baptist missionaries, and is said to have made plans to be rebaptized. But through the help and encouragement of faithful friends and brethren, he recovered his equanimity, and was once more stabilized in the Lutheran faith.¹⁰

Neither Håkanson nor his congregations ever forgot the lessons they learned through these painful experiences. The American frontier with its free, pluralistic, and competitive religious situation was no friendly place for theological obscurantism. Congregational survival depended upon confessional integrity, and such integrity necessitated *differentiation* at exactly those points which distinguished one denomination from another. The alternative was confusion, chaos, and eventual dissolution. This lesson was becoming clear not only to Håkanson and the New Sweden community, but also to all those who were endeavoring to establish a Swedish *Lutheran* church on the broad prairies of the Middle West a hundred years ago.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 92f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 94ff. In a letter to Esbjörn, dated March 29, 1854, Håkanson bares his soul, asking forgiveness of both God and man for permitting himself to be carried away by the Baptists, acknowledging with humble gratitude the enlightenment and clarification which both Hasselquist and Esbjörn had given him regarding the Lutheran doctrine of baptism.

The Advent of Lars Paul Esbjörn

By 1848 the "America fever" was running high in Old Sweden. Friends and relatives who had left home and families sent letters back home extolling, often in extravagant terms, the virtues of life in the United States. Such letters were often published in the Swedish press throughout the realm, and more and more people were beginning to think about and discuss the possibilities of emigration.¹¹ As yet, however, the movement was associated, both in the popular mind as well as in official circles, with irresponsible adventurers and radical malcontents. No person of official standing had yet been identified with the migration. But in 1849 it was rumored that a Lutheran pastor, well known in revival and temperance circles, was preparing to lead a sizeable party, including a considerable part of his own congregation, to the United States. The pastor was Lars Paul Esbjörn, a clergyman in the Church of Sweden, who at the age of forty-one had established himself as a preacher of ability and promise, and a leader in the evangelical movement throughout the land. Esbjörn was born in 1808 of humble parentage, and because of straightened financial circumstances was unable to avail himself of the most thorough theological education offered at Uppsala University, but took a shorter and more practical course of theological studies.¹² He was ordained in 1832, and served as assistant pastor from 1832 to 1835 at Östervåla, a large rural parish in the northern section of the province of Uppland. From 1835 to 1849 he served as parish pastor in the factory town Oslättfors in Uppland and as schoolteacher in the neighboring village of Hille. It was during his years at Oslättfors that Esbjörn came under the influence of George Scott, C. O. Rosenius, and Peter Wieselgren, and thereafter identified himself as a champion of the cause of revivalism and temperance.¹³

In many respects Esbjörn was a complex figure, whose personality was characterized by strange contradictions. He loved people, but his

¹¹ Typical specimens of "America Letters" are printed in *Tidsskrift för Svensk evangelisk lutersk kyrkohistoria i Nord Amerika och för teologiska och kyrkliga frågor*, 1899, 1910, and in *The Swedish-American Historical Society, Year Book*, 1905-1930. See also Gunnar Westin, *Emigranterna och kyrkan. Brev från och till svenskar i Amerika, 1849-1872*. Stockholm, 1932.

¹² The documents relating to Esbjörn's education at Uppsala University are in the Provincial Archives at Uppsala. An examination of these documents by the author in 1937 revealed that Esbjörn's theological training was designed to meet the minimum requirements for ordination of that day. His highest academic achievements were in the scientific rather than theological fields.

¹³ For a brief but excellent biographical sketch of Esbjörn see G. Westin, "Lars P. Esbjörn," *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*. See also, Eric Norelius' "Personliga hågkomster of L. P. Esbjörn," *Tidskrift för svensk evangelisk-luthersk kyrkohistoria i N. Amerika*, 1899, pp. 361-366. Sam Rönnegård, *Prairie Shepherd*, tr. G. Everett Arden, Rock Island, 1952, pp. 13-68.

morose and suspicious nature tended to alienate his human relationships. He had strong convictions, but the line separating conviction from plain, unreasoning stubbornness was often hard to delineate. He was not an intellectual, and yet had intellectual interests, particularly in natural science. He dedicated his life to the gospel of peace between God and man, but the peace which he sought to impart to others seemed often to escape him during frequent periods of melancholy and depression. He was shy and retiring in the presence of more commanding personalities, but a strong streak of egocentricity prevented him from granting hearty co-operation to those who did not fully share his viewpoint. After experiencing what he called his "conversion" during a revival crusade in 1840, he became increasingly puritanical in his conception of religion. Hounded by poverty, saddened by bereavements, disillusioned by disappointments and discouragements, compelled by changing circumstances to revise drastically his basic attitudes from theological broad-mindedness to rigid orthodoxy, from advocacy of religious freedom to religious establishment, from sympathy toward interdenominational fellowship and co-operation to an almost bitter exclusiveness, Esbjörn appears in many respects as a tragic figure. Yet his was a spirit of heroic proportions. In the long perspective of history he indeed stands forth as a frail human being with many of the faults, failings, and weaknesses to which human flesh is heir. None-the-less, he became, under the guidance of God, the chosen vessel called to found on American soil a new church, and begin a new chapter in the saga of a Swedish Lutheran tradition in America. In this undertaking there is ample evidence of courage, patience, faith, love, and forbearance on the part of Lars Paul Esbjörn, the man who has been called the "Founder of the Augustana Church."¹⁴

News of the Esbjörn emigration plans caused a mild sensation in Sweden. Some cheered, others hooted. Here is a real shepherd of the common people who casts his lot with the underdog! What kind of charlatan is this man who dares to drag his large family, wife and six children, the youngest, twin sons, only six months old, clear across the ocean? The man must be crazy! Esbjörn is a man of courage and vision who will not forsake his countrymen across the broad Atlantic! Esbjörn is an irresponsible adventurer who brazenly entices his flock to forsake their beloved homeland! Esbjörn is a

¹⁴ Eric Norelius, intimate friend of Esbjörn, gives a critical sketch of Esbjörn in *De svenska luterska församlingarnas och svenskarnes historia i Amerika*, Vol. I, pp. 173-186.

modern Moses who leads his people out of the land of bondage into Canaan! Esbjörn is a blind leader of the blind.¹⁵

Though Esbjörn may have been something of a hero in the eyes of those who yearned for a broader freedom and more secure future, in the estimation of the ecclesiastical officials in particular he was more like an irresponsible fanatic. When he applied for a leave of absence from his Swedish charge, Archbishop Henrik Reuterdaahl took occasion to administer a rebuke by warning him about "restless minds" which do not thrive within the church, and of "ambitions to power which subdue the consciences and wills of other people."¹⁶ Even some of Esbjörn's friends among the clergy tried to dissuade him, as evidenced in a letter dated at Strömsbro, February 5, 1849, in which the writer concludes that "(1) Your journey is not of God; (2) your motives in going to America are not entirely pure, and that which is pure is not sufficiently valid and powerful for such an undertaking; (3) the journey, on the whole, will be unsuccessful."¹⁷

But Esbjörn was not to be dissuaded by either friend or foe. Indeed he was greatly heartened and encouraged when the Swedish Missionary Society voted to give him a travel grant of three hundred *riksdaler*, and the Department of Ecclesiastical Affairs notified him that his request for a leave of absence had been granted with the privilege of continuing his right of seniority in the Swedish ministerium and the prerogative of resuming his service in the Church of Sweden whenever he so desired. Thus, Esbjörn could now go to America as a Swedish pastor in full possession of his ministerial office, even though he must rely for financial support upon whatever resources he could find in America. It was plainly understood that this was a private venture and in no sense a project of the Church of Sweden. The Swedish Church was naturally an interested spectator on the sidelines, so to speak, but Esbjörn was strictly "on his own."

On the evening of June 29, 1849, the freighter *Cobden*, slipped out of the harbor of Gävle, carrying one hundred and forty-six passengers, including Esbjörn and his family. Sixty-eight days later the little sailing vessel dropped anchor in the bustling harbor of New York.¹⁸

¹⁵ Rönnegård, *op. cit.*, pp. 69ff.

¹⁶ Westin, *Emigranterna och kyrkan*, p. 37f.

¹⁷ Letter in the *Esbjörn Collection*, Augustana Archives, Rock Island.

¹⁸ An interesting account of the voyage is recorded in a daily diary which Esbjörn kept and which is preserved in the *Esbjörn Collection*, Augustana Archives, Rock Island. A translation of the diary is given in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. V, pp. 12-34.

The brief stop of several days in New York was decisive for the Esbjörn party. It was here that Esbjörn met his first great disappointment, and here also the final destination of the immigrants was determined. Olof Hedstrom and his *Bethel Ship* mission became a kind of headquarters for the group. Through association in Sweden with George Scott, Esbjörn had become favorably disposed toward Methodism, and undoubtedly had hopes of receiving financial aid from this large and powerful American communion. Pastor Hedstrom informed him that it would not be difficult to receive such support, provided, however, that Esbjörn would renounce his Lutheran affiliation and become a Methodist.

For a man confronted by the enormous responsibilities which now faced Esbjörn, Hedstrom's proposal was undoubtedly a tempting offer, and Esbjörn is said to have wavered momentarily, but through the encouragement of his wife, he decided to reject the offer and take the consequences.¹⁹ Esbjörn also conferred with Robert Baird, the Presbyterian temperance leader who was well known in Sweden. Would it be possible to receive financial assistance from the *American Home Missionary Society*, controlled by a Presbyterian-Congregationalist board of directors? He was told that, "according to its own rules, it [the A. H. M. S.] could not support a pastor who was not a member of some American Church which could supervise his conduct, work and teachings." He would have to seek for aid elsewhere.

In the meantime, a decision must also be made regarding the specific location to which the party would now direct its steps. Again, Hedstrom was helpful in pointing out the advantages of Illinois and the Mississippi Valley. Several land agents in New York were ready and eager to serve the immigrants. One agent presented a gaudily colored chart picturing an attractive layout of a small city in Henry County, Illinois, called Andover. It depicted a neat settlement on the broad banks of the deep-flowing Edwards River, a tributary of the mighty Mississippi, with steamboats plying to and fro from the Andover harbor. Even more significant was the map showing the cross-country distance between Andover and Bishop Hill, the site of the Jansonite colony, to be about twelve miles, and the distance to Victoria, headquarters of Jonas Hedstrom, about sixteen miles. The immigrants were interested, and the real estate

¹⁹ See Gustav Andreén, *L. P. Esbjörn and the Pilgrim Fathers of 1849*. Rock Island, 1925. This is the only source which could be discovered to substantiate this alleged episode.

agent is said to have declared, "You may have the whole township and money for your church building, if you make up your minds quickly." They looked at one another. What a vision! A rich land of milk and honey, a city on the river with steamboats and a church! Andover it must be.²⁰

The journey inland was by steamer up the Hudson River to Albany, then by boat through the Erie Canal to Buffalo, on to Cleveland, and through the Great Lakes to Chicago. Crowded and unsanitary facilities, coupled with a siege of the dreaded cholera, turned the inland journey into a nightmare. Men, women, and children died, one after another, and were hastily buried in the sand banks along the route. Esbjörn's two infant sons were among the casualties, the one having succumbed before the S.S. *Cobden* left Sweden, the other along the route of the Great Lakes. In these days of suffering and distress, Esbjörn doubtless heard again and again the echo of those who had warned, "Your voyage is not of God." "The journey will not be successful."

The Esbjörn party landed in Chicago on September 30, 1849, after spending twenty days traveling from New York. In a letter to the Swedish Home Missionary Society, Esbjörn described the experience in these words:

We arrived in Chicago on the morning of September 30. Here several more were stricken and died in the cholera hospital, and two days after having visited the hospital I also was stricken with the same plague. I was certain that I would die, and thought that the Good Shepherd now desired to call home His most humble servant. But He had decided otherwise. Through the efficient homeopathic physicians and the untiring prayers and constant care of my dear wife, by the grace of God, the illness was conquered.²¹

It was not until October 24 that Esbjörn finally reached Andover. The survivors of his party had preceded him and were already scattered throughout the countryside. No doubt there was much rejoicing when Pastor and people were reunited again. But there was disappointment and perplexity, too! The vision which had seemed so real in the land agent's office had vanished in the clearer light of reality. The neat city on the agent's chart turned out to be in fact only a tiny settlement of nondescript houses and shacks, while the broad, deep-flowing Edwards River was in truth little more than a small brook meandering through the hills and marshlands, but which

²⁰ See Esbjörn letter, dated Chicago, 1860, *Esbjörn Collection*.

²¹ Quoted from Rönnegård, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

nevertheless had proved difficult enough to cross without bridges. The only steamboats which would ever traffic on that stream were on the real estate map in New York! To many of the newcomers Andover and its environs must have seemed a terribly desolate place. But worst of all was the report that during Esbjörn's convalescence in Chicago, Jonas Hedstrom, the Methodist missionary from Victoria, had visited Andover and persuaded a number of Esbjörn's followers to forsake Andover and move to the Victoria community.²²

The Pioneer Years in Illinois

New parties of immigrants were steadily pouring into the area, settling in Andover and the surrounding communities of Galesburg, Moline, Knoxville, and Henderson. But the very first problem Esbjörn had to solve was economic. He had scant knowledge of other Lutherans and resources for aid which might be tapped among them. His own people were far too poverty stricken to provide for the support of a pastor and his family. There seemed to be only one possibility, and that was to apply to the American Home Missionary Society, in spite of what Dr. Baird had told him in New York regarding the rules and regulations of the Society. Dr. J. Blanchard, president of Knox College in Galesburg, was a member of the Board of Directors of the Society and a man of considerable influence. Through his kind offices Esbjörn's petition for aid reached the regional committee. This committee, consisting of three men, including Dr. Blanchard, investigated Esbjörn's credentials and he was subjected to a thorough examination regarding his faith and practice. With reference to this experience Esbjörn later reported:

Ready to give to one and all a reason for the hope that is in me, I related my own spiritual experiences and the chief points of our Lutheran doctrine. Although the Association did not approve them all, especially our teaching about the sacraments, election, and the possibility of the elect falling from grace, nevertheless, we agreed that I should "preach the gospel and administer the sacraments, and observe church practice, ceremonies, and discipline as an Evangelical Lutheran servant of Christ."²³

²² Esbjörn's own account of his experiences as a frontier pastor is given in "Berättelse om de Svenska Luterska församlingarnes i Norra Amerika uppkomst och närvarande tillstånd, framställd vid Uppsala Erkestifts prestmöte den 14 Juni, 1865," *Utdrag ur protokoll och handlingar rörande prestmötet i Uppsala år 1865*.

²³ Letter to Swedish Missionary Society, 1850, quoted by Rönnegård, *op. cit.*, p. 140. See also Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 125ff.

On January 14, 1850, the Directors of the Society approved Esbjörn's petition for aid, granting him an annual stipend of \$300, the appointment to take effect at the beginning of the next quarter, after which Esbjörn would be subject to the regulation of the Society. Among the stipulations included in a special sheet of "General Instructions" were these: He must send to the Society each quarter a summary report of his work for the previous period. Also, "No one shall be received as a member of a congregation, or admitted to the Lord's Table, who can not give evidence of being born anew."²⁴ To receive members by "prästbetyg" or transfer from the Church of Sweden or through confirmation was unacceptable to the Society. Esbjörn was to be allowed to function "as an Evangelical Lutheran servant of Christ," to be sure, but he was expected to conform to Reformed practice and act in accordance with the theological premises which had been developed in America during the First and Second Great Awakenings, the chief architect of which was the great New England divine, Jonathan Edwards. According to Edward's treatise, published in 1758, and titled, *The Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended*, the sinner possesses some ability to obey God's will, but this capacity is contravened by the evil and self-willed impulses of the human heart. Therefore the heart must be recreated, the natural will transformed, and the emotions purified and refined. Such a change can occur only under the stern hammer blows of the holy law of God which must be mercilessly applied until the resisting human heart is crushed, the sinner hurled into the abyss of despair, and turns finally in terror and repentance to God. Such repentance leads eventually to a sense of release and peace with God and true obedience to His precepts. This is the essence of salvation. Such an experience must be so real, so gripping, and so totally life-transforming that it can be dated by the very day and hour it occurred. This is what the great American revivalists in the Reformed camp meant by "the new birth." In such a concept of Christianity the sacraments as *means of grace* are replaced by prayer, exhortation, and evangelistic techniques, and the emotional experience of conversion is substituted for the promises of God's Word as the ground and basis for Christian certainty. Liturgi-

²⁴ The original documents containing Esbjörn's quarterly reports are in the Archives of Chicago Theological Seminary, a Congregational institution adjacent to the University of Chicago. Several of these reports are given in Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 125ff. and in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, VI. X, 1944, pp. 11ff.

cal forms and traditional usages are deemed to be hindrances to the free working of the Spirit of God.²⁵

It is important to note, in this connection, that the subjectivism which is intrinsic to this viewpoint is similar to that of the pietistic revivals with which Esbjörn was familiar in Sweden. It is indubitable, however, that he did not yet possess sufficient theological perceptiveness to recognize the synergistic implications in this American frontier religion. His lack of a thorough theological training in Sweden, coupled with his present dire economic need, inclined him to accept the stipulations of the Society with as few reservations and questions as possible. But when he endeavored to be faithful to his Lutheran conception of the church, on the one hand, and on the other to put the Reformed principles into action and implement the instructions given by the Society, he began to sense the tension between the two. Here, for example, were his countrymen, some of them members of his former parish, scattered across the countryside. They were Lutherans, born and reared in the church of the homeland. Most of them had celebrated their departure from home and family by attending Holy Communion on their last Sunday with relatives and friends. But out here in the wild prairies of the American frontier they were to be denied the comfort of the Lord's Supper, and excluded from church membership, until they could produce evidence of what the Americans called "genuine Christianity." And we may be sure that Esbjörn's sense of frustration was not diminished when his employment by the American Home Missionary Society was reported by the public press, and he soon found himself attacked and accused of being unfaithful to his ordination vow, a follower of Calvin rather than Luther.²⁶

It was Gustaf Unonius who stepped forward as Esbjörn's most severe critic. In personal correspondence and in the columns of the *Prairie Herald* and the *Chicago Daily Journal*, the two men waged a bitter battle, accusing each other of ignorance, deception, and vin-

²⁵ For critical analyses of Edwardian theology and the basic theological premises of American frontier revivalism see Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards*, New York, 1949. E. S. Gaustad, *The Great Awakening in New England*, New York, 1957. F. S. Foster, *A Genetic History of New England Theology*, Chicago, 1909. C. E. Cunningham, *Timothy Dwight*, New York, 1942.

²⁶ Negotiations with Esbjörn were reported in *The Home Missionary*, published by A. H. M. S., March, 1850. A critical letter from Unonius dated March 5, 1850, is preserved in the *Esbjörn Collection*. See also *Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift*, Uppsala, 1945, p. 207.

dictiveness. Indeed, the debate grew so acrimonious that Unonius finally filed suit against Esbjörn for defamation of character.²⁷

About the same time as Esbjörn was waging war with Unonius he was confronted by trouble on another front. Gustaf Palmquist, former Lutheran and lay evangelist, invaded Esbjörn's field of labor. Palmquist had been converted to Baptist views through the influence of another former Lutheran, Anders Wiberg. He accused Esbjörn and the Lutherans of teaching "the man-made doctrine of infant baptism which is unscriptural," and of trying to establish a Lutheran Church in America which would be just as "narrow and authoritarian as the Church of Sweden." Palmquist was an excellent preacher and possessed a charming personality. He succeeded in winning a number of people upon whom Esbjörn had depended for leadership in his own mission, and on August 13, 1852, organized in Rock Island, Illinois, the first Swedish Baptist congregation in America. Esbjörn quickly recognized the danger which threatened from this quarter, and the imperative need of meeting the threat on both theological and practical grounds. He published articles in the press, preached sermons, and wrote numerous letters warning his countrymen of the "errors of the Baptist sect." Here again, as in his experiences with the Methodists and the Episcopalians, the easy alignments among Christians which had seemed so natural in Sweden, must be re-evaluated and reassessed in the light of the new circumstances of a free and competitive American situation.²⁸

Fortunately, however, all was not strife and discouragement. In the midst of tribulation there was much for which to thank God. On March 18, 1850, for example, the congregation at Andover was formally organized with ten charter members, including Esbjörn and his wife. A week later thirty-two additional names were added to the church roll,²⁹ and reports were being received of Swedish settlements in other communities, near and far.

Furthermore, Esbjörn's debate in the public press with Unonius had brought him to the attention of other Lutherans in America. During the summer of 1850, Dr. W. A. Passavant of Pittsburgh and Dr. W.

²⁷ See *Prairie Herald*, September 18, 1850, article by "R. C. H."; December 4, 1850, article by Esbjörn; *Chicago Daily Journal*, December 18, 1850, article by Unonius; February 17, 1851, article by Esbjörn. Regarding the lawsuit see Norelius, *op. cit.*, I, p. 184f.

²⁸ A brief sketch of the early rivalry between Esbjörn and Palmquist is given in Norelius, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 150ff. For the development and growth of the Swedish Baptist Church in various sections of America see Frank Peterson, *Femtio år. En Överblick, 1852-1902*, Minneapolis, 1902.

²⁹ See *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 10f.

M. Reynolds, president of Capital University at Columbus, Ohio, made an inspection journey to the west to acquaint themselves with the work being done among the Scandinavians. As a consequence of this trip, Passavant inaugurated a promotional scheme for Esbjörn's mission which he published in his newspaper, *The Missionary*. He proposed financial aid through offerings to be received and given to needy Scandinavian congregations, the endowment of a Scandinavian professorship at some Lutheran educational institution for the purpose of training Scandinavian young men for the ministry, the calling of a Scandinavian missionary chaplain to be stationed in New York City, and the organization of a Scandinavian synod.³⁰

Passavant also lent his good offices to arrangements which enabled Esbjörn to travel to the eastern seaboard, giving him opportunity to present in person his cause to fellow Lutherans. From April through July, 1851, Esbjörn journeyed about 3,600 miles and gave addresses at three different synodical conventions which happened to be in session at the time, namely, Joint Synod of Ohio, Pittsburgh, and Pennsylvania. Doors were opened to him in numerous congregations along the way, giving him a chance to plead his cause before large crowds in Columbus, Ohio, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York, and elsewhere, meeting many of the outstanding leaders in the eastern sections of the land. His appeals elicited ready response. Offerings were received and many individual gifts of money were presented to him. In the course of this journey he met the celebrated singer, Jenny Lind, who added the generous gift of \$1500 to Esbjörn's missionary funds. During this excursion Esbjörn collected \$2,268.85, and subsequent contributions raised this total to approximately \$3,000. In a very real way this sum may be said to have been the initial working capital of the Augustana Lutheran Church, for with the help of this money the first church buildings among the Swedes of the Midwest were erected at Andover, New Sweden, and Moline.³¹

Esbjörn's mission was further strengthened and encouraged in the autumn of 1851 when he united his congregations with the *Synod of Northern Illinois*. Recalling the isolation which had ultimately withered the earlier work in Delaware, Esbjörn was convinced that the future welfare of his work demanded the establishment of fruitful and mutually helpful connections with other Lutherans in the land.³² Sev-

³⁰ *The Missionary*, July, 1850; *The Lutheran Observer*, October 25, 1850.

³¹ Report to A. H. M. S., July 22, 1851, *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, p. 15f. Norelius, I, *op. cit.*, p. 148f.

³² See his "Berättelse," 1865, *op. cit.*

eral alternatives were open to him. On the one hand, he could participate with Pastors A. C. Preus, H. A. Stub, and C. L. Clausen in the formation of the Norwegian Synod in Wisconsin.³³ But the group was known to be tinged with Grundtvigian and high church tendencies. On the other hand, he could have joined some eastern synod, such as the Joint Synod of Ohio, but distance would make co-operation and communication difficult.

The most feasible plan was proposed by the Norwegian Pastor Paul Anderson of Chicago, a Haugian pietist, who together with Pastors Ole Andrewsen and O. T. Hatlestad had formed a small Norwegian conference in 1850.³⁴ Andersen suggested that the Scandinavian congregations join with the Americans and Germans of the area and establish a western synod in the upper Mississippi Valley. This suggestion was favorably received, and after some preliminary negotiations representatives of the Norwegian, German, and American congregations assembled at Cedarville, Stephenson County, Illinois, September 18, 1851, and organized the *Synod of Northern Illinois*, adopting a constitution which committed the new association to the Augsburg Confession as "mainly correct." Esbjörn and his congregations had been invited to participate in these proceedings, but the Swedish pastor and his delegate, E. M. Mankee, were delayed enroute and arrived at the convention a day late. After an examination of their application, the Swedish delegation was granted full membership in the association. Esbjörn, however, was not satisfied with the doctrinal article in the new constitution. He felt that the phrase "mainly correct" was vague and ambiguous and made room for doctrinal compromise. He, therefore, requested that in the official minutes it be recorded that the Swedish congregations were entering the association committed to the conservative principle that "the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church contain a correct summary and exposition of the divine Word, wherefore we declare and adopt them as the foundation of our faith and doctrine, next to the Holy Scriptures."³⁵

The action which Esbjörn took at Cedarville had two important implications. In the first place, it involved the Swedish congregations in a co-operative effort of immense significance, for the major respon-

³³ This synod, popularly known as "The Norwegian Synod in Wisconsin," was formally established after much debate and lengthy negotiations, January 7, 1851, at Rock Prairie, Wisconsin. See J. M. Rohne, *Norwegian Lutheranism up to 1872*, New York, 1926, p. 114f.

³⁴ Rohne, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-104. See also *Lutheran Observer*, March 8, 1850, article by H. L. Dox.

³⁵ *Minutes of the First Session of the Synod of Northern Illinois*, September 18-21, 1851, p. 5.

sibility of the new synod was the support of a training school for Lutheran pastors which was being moved from Hillsboro to Springfield, Illinois, and in the process having its name changed from "Hillsboro College" to "Illinois State University."³⁶ Such a school was intended to furnish religious leaders who were intimately acquainted with the problems prevailing on the American frontier, and to provide training suited to a frontier ministry. The success of such an educational venture would demand the greatest measure of mutuality and reciprocity on the part of everyone concerned. Thus, this endeavor, and other similar tasks undertaken by the Synod of Northern Illinois would exert a centripetal force, pulling all constituent elements together and creating a union which might be more apparent than real. In the second place, Esbjörn's action at Cedarville marked an important step in the direction of the differentiation of the Swedish congregations in relation, not to Methodists, Episcopalians, and Baptists, but to other Lutheran traditions. Esbjörn's rejection of the phrase "mainly correct" and his affirmation of the Lutheran symbols as "a correct summary and exposition of the divine Word" was in fact a public disavowal of "American Lutheranism" as advocated by Dr. S. S. Schmucker of Gettysburg Seminary in Pennsylvania and his followers. What the positive consequences of this stand would ultimately involve were not yet clear, to be sure, but the negative aspects were apparent. How far to the right the Swedes would be willing to go only time would tell, but confessionally they meant, at the very outset, to disassociate themselves from left-wing Lutheranism in America, even though this was the very label with which they had been tagged in Sweden. Esbjörn was beginning to realize, however, that the label carried a different connotation in America. Here it seemed to mean change by compromise; there it had meant change by renewal.

Esbjörn's Co-laborers

The most encouraging development of Esbjörn's early years in America, however, was doubtless the recruitment of several able and consecrated colleagues from Sweden. As his field of labor expanded and calls for pastoral care became more numerous and insistent, Esbjörn communicated with his friends in Sweden, such as Fjellstedt, Wieselgren, and others, urging them to find helpers who were willing to come to America. Through the efforts of these men, several pastors responded to the challenge of the mission field in America and became

³⁶ *Lutheran Observer*, November 7, 1851, article by Francis Springer.

Esbjörn's collaborators. The first to arrive was *Tufve Nilsson Hasselquist*. Born in the southern province of Skåne, March 2, 1816, Hasselquist graduated from the University of Lund and was ordained in 1839. For the next thirteen years he served as a pastor in the Church of Sweden and distinguished himself as a preacher of unusual ability, a strict Pietist, a friend of revivalism and temperance, and a critic of the established church.³⁷ Through Dr. Fjellstedt, Hasselquist received a call from the congregation in Galesburg, Illinois, which Esbjörn had organized during the summer of 1851. Hasselquist arrived on the scene in October, 1852 and, as one commentator has remarked, "if ever there was 'a man for the place' it was Hasselquist."³⁸ A tall, powerfully built man in the prime of life, by temperament and spirit admirably suited to his calling as a leader of men, Hasselquist became the very embodiment of the new church which he served. In contrast to Esbjörn, Hasselquist was an "outgoing" personality to whom people naturally gravitated, and whose wise and common-sense counsel they readily accepted.

He was an indefatigable worker. While he served his own Galesburg congregation with outstanding success, he traveled far and wide organizing numerous new congregations; in 1855 he founded the first important Swedish-American newspaper, *Det Rätta Hemlandet*, and edited the journal for many years; he was elected the first president of the Augustana Synod in 1860 and filled that position for ten consecutive years, and after Esbjörn's return to Sweden in 1863, he was called to head Augustana College and Theological Seminary, a post which he occupied until his death in 1891.

Hasselquist was an ecumenical spirit to whom the free church atmosphere of America was most congenial, and he was ready to grasp the hand of friendship extended from any quarter. Liturgical forms and ceremonies were not sacred to him, as he saw no threat to Lutheran doctrine if such forms were laid aside and his church co-operated with other denominations. His basic viewpoint may be characterized as that of a practical, low-church pietist, and through his extensive and penetrating influence he stamped the genius of his own outlook and spirit deeply and indelibly upon the Church he served.³⁹

³⁷ Eric Norelius, *T. N. Hasselquist, en levnadsteckning*, Rock Island, no date, pp. 15-20. See also O. F. Ander, *T. N. Hasselquist*, Rock Island, 1931, pp. 8-10.

³⁸ George M. Stephenson, *The Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration*, Minneapolis, 1932, p. 168.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

The second man to answer Esbjörn's macedonian call was *Erland Carlsson*. Born in the province of Småland, August 24, 1822, Carlsson studied at the University of Lund and was ordained in 1849. Like Esbjörn and Hasselquist, he identified himself with the revival and temperance movements in Sweden and was looked upon by the ecclesiastical authorities as a free church radical. When opportunities for advancement were seemingly closed to him in the homeland, he accepted a call to the congregation in Chicago which came to him through Dr. Fjellstedt. He arrived in Chicago during the summer of 1853. By this time Chicago was becoming the hub of Swedish immigration into the western territories. Thousands of Swedish nationals poured into the city each year, most of them poor, bewildered, and in need of counsel, and some sick and dying. To these newcomers the residence of Pastor Carlsson was like a haven of refuge, and a constant stream of humanity found its way to his doorstep. Carlsson served the Immanuel Church in Chicago for twenty-two years, rendering invaluable service to his church and countrymen as the chief immigrant guide among Swedish Americans in the Midwest.

Carlsson's ministry was characterized by a more churchly temper than that of either Esbjörn or Hasselquist. While his older colleagues often bowed to the popular bias against liturgical forms and clerical vestments, Carlsson ignored such prejudices, donned the ministerial frock, bands, and pulpit cape, and conducted public worship according to the Swedish rite. Although Carlsson was an able preacher, his greatest gift was that of an administrator and practical businessman. In the affairs of his own congregation, as well as in the expanding work of the Augustana Church, the organizing genius of Carlsson was clearly evident. The congregational constitution, for example, which he drew up for the Immanuel Church, became the model for others, and his plan for financial support of the burgeoning institutions of the Church became part of the structure of the Augustana Synod. For thirty years Carlsson shared with Hasselquist the role of "chief pilot" of Augustana, and his name appears on the membership rolls of more committees and delegations than any other individual of his time.⁴⁰

During the summer of 1856, two more recruits from the Swedish

⁴⁰ Interesting sketches of Erland Carlsson are given in Norelius, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 393-438. *Korsbaneret*, Rock Island, 1881, pp. 67-126. Nils Forsander, *Lifsbilder*, Rock Island, 1915, Part I. *Jubel-Album tillegnad Augustana Synoden*, ed. Swensson and Abrahamson, Chicago, 1893, pp. 41-46. See also *Minneskrift, illustrerad album utgifvet af svenska ev. lutherska Immanuel församlingen i Chicago . . .*, Rock Island, Ill., 1902.

Ministerium joined Esbjörn in America, *Jonas Swensson* and *Olof Christian Telemak Andrén*. Swensson was born in Småland, August, 14, 1828, and completed his theological studies at Uppsala University. His ordination occurred October 8, 1851. His parish service in Sweden continued until 1856 when he received a call through Dr. Fjellstedt from the congregation in Sugar Grove, Pennsylvania. His American ministry began during the summer of 1856, serving congregations in Sugar Grove and Jamestown, New York, until 1858, when he moved to Andover, Illinois, as Esbjörn's successor in that parish. He was secretary of the Synod for a number of years, and in 1870, when Hasselquist requested to be relieved of the duties as synodical president, Swensson was elected to succeed him, and filled the post until his death three years later. Of the men who founded the Augustana Church, Swensson was perhaps the least influenced by the revival movement in Sweden, although his personal inclinations were undoubtedly more closely akin to the spirit of the advocates of renewal and reform than to that of the supporters of the *status quo*. That Swensson was considered a kindred personality is evident in the very fact that Fjellstedt chose him as a candidate for the call to Pennsylvania. By nature somewhat retiring, Swensson suffered from frequent spells of deep melancholy, inner anxiety, and physical illness, but his public ministry was marked by a brilliant style of preaching, clear biblical exposition, and a tender pastoral care.⁴¹

O. C. T. Andrén, close friend of Swensson in Sweden, was born in Skåne, September 21, 1824, studied at Lund and was ordained just before Christmas, 1847, at the age of twenty-three, after achieving high commendation from his professors as a student of exceptional ability. From 1848 to 1856 Andrén served as assistant pastor in several Swedish parishes, and was known as an earnest pietistic preacher. At the suggestion of Dr. Fjellstedt, the congregation in Moline, Illinois, issued the young clergyman a call to come to America and become their pastor. He began his ministry in Moline, July 31, 1856, and quickly won the confidence and high esteem of his congregation and his colleagues.

In 1860, Andrén was sent to Sweden to solicit funds for the fledgling Synod and to collect books for the library of the new theological seminary. He was successful in both endeavors. Aided and encouraged by Fjellstedt, Wieselgren, and the *National Evangelical Foundation*, unexpected doors were opened to him in all parts of Sweden. From the

⁴¹ Norelius, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 186-225; *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-52.

Royal Library of King Charles XV and from private sources, approximately five thousand volumes were donated and shipped to Chicago, and by royal decree a nationwide offering was received for the benefit of the new church in America which amounted to more than ten thousand dollars. Because of failing health, Andrén did not return to America, but re-entered the service of the Swedish Church where he remained until his death in 1870.⁴²

These five men, Esbjörn, Hasselquist, Carlsson, Swensson, and Andrén, who had received their theological training in the universities of Uppsala and Lund, brought to their American mission the practical wisdom and insight gained through the years of parish experience in the Church of Sweden, and were the chief architects of the Augustana Lutheran Church. Differing indeed in their individual endowments and personal predilections, they nevertheless represented, embodied, and expressed that tradition of warmhearted, personal and evangelical piety which stemmed from the movement for religious and spiritual renewal of the nineteenth century in Sweden.

Following their leadership were a number of men ordained by the Synod of Northern Illinois after a probationary period of apprenticeship and training, the most outstanding of whom was *Eric Norelius*. He was born October 26, 1833, in Hälsingland, and came as an immigrant youth to America in 1850. While yet in Sweden, Norelius had become associated with the ultraconservative movement led by F. G. Hedberg. At Esbjörn's suggestion he spent the years from 1851 to 1855 in study at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, an institution belonging to the Joint Synod of Ohio, where he absorbed more of the conservative spirit. Throughout his long and fruitful ministry, which began in the spring of 1855 and continued until his death, March 15, 1916, Norelius may be said to have represented the right wing of Swedish-American Lutheranism. He looked with approval upon all efforts to strengthen and encourage strict confessionalism, and opposed endeavors which to him seemed to tend in the direction of unionism, interdenominational toleration or co-operation, and fellowship with Lutherans and others suspected of theological liberalism. Norelius centered his greatest work in Minnesota, but was also active in the general work of the Church.

⁴² For a sketch of Andrén's life see, Norelius, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 271-365. *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-48. O. N. Olson, *Olof Christian Telemak Andrén*, Rock Island, 1954. For details of Andrén's mission to Sweden see *Hemlandet*, August 29, 1860, June 19, 1861. *Synodical Minutes*, 1862, p. 14, 1864, p. 14.

He was the only man the Augustana Church ever elected to serve two separate terms as synodical president,⁴³ and his monumental labors as the first historian and archivist of the Augustana Synod has placed succeeding generations deeply in his debt.⁴⁴

⁴³ Dr. Norelius served his first term as president of the Synod from 1874 to 1881. In 1899 he was again chosen as synodical president and continued in office until 1911.

⁴⁴ The most complete biography of Norelius is Emory Johnson, *Eric Norelius, Pioneer Midwest Pastor and Churchman*, Rock Island, 1954. For a brief sketch, characterizing the ministry of Norelius see *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-54.

Lutheran Versus Lutheran

THE SYNOD OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS with which the Scandinavians became associated in 1851 was a district synod of the federation known as the *General Synod* which had been organized in 1820, and by 1860 comprised approximately two thirds of all Lutherans in America. Although the Synod of Northern Illinois was but a remote, frontier outpost of Lutheranism in America a century ago, in a real way it may be seen as a microcosm of both the General Synod itself and of the Lutheran Church in this country in the sense that within this district synod there existed very nearly the same differences of opinion and variations of usage and practice as characterized the larger scene. The tensions which aggravated the Lutheran Church elsewhere existed also in the Synod of Northern Illinois.

Lutheran Nativism

In the first place, sociological factors were at work in terms of the clash between an *American religious nativism and immigrant European traditionalism*. It will be recalled that in the political realm, the incursion of vast immigrant masses, particularly Roman Catholics from Ireland and southern Europe, into the Republic during the first half of the nineteenth century brought into being the "Know-Nothing-Party" which was pledged to protect America and American interests from the potential threat of foreign domination which, it was feared, would impose upon native-born Americans, and particularly American Protestants, ideas, ideals, and modes of life alien to the spirit and temper of America. American nativism which reached its political peak in the "Know-Nothing-Party" was not limited, however, to the political realm. It has appeared also in the cultural, economic, racial, and religious phases of American life.¹

Nativism in the Lutheran Church emerged as an expression of hostility on the part of the Americanized elements of the church to the

¹ See W. D. Overdyke, *The Know-Nothing Party in the South*, Baton Rouge, La., 1950, p. 2f. See also L. D. Scisco, *Political Nativism in New York State*, New York, 1901, p. 16. Excellent studies of the impact of immigration upon American society are, Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration, 1607-1860*, Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1940. G. M. Stephenson, *History of American Immigration*, Ginn and Co., Boston, Mass., 1926.

masses of Lutheran immigrants who refused to accept the Americanized version of Lutheranism which they found in this country, and who sought to recall their fellow believers to the traditional expressions of faith and practice which were characteristically European. The tension at this point involved both doctrine and practice, and particularly the peculiarly American usage known as "New Measures." "New Measures" was a term and a concept which derived from the revival techniques which the Reformed churches had developed during the First and Second Great Awakenings, and which had been adopted by many Lutherans through their participation in, and association with, American revivalism. "New Measures" implied the use of new and more effective ways and means of reaching unconverted people with the gospel and turning them in repentance to God. It was assumed that the raw and undisciplined life on the frontier demanded more than the quiet preaching of the gospel and administering of the means of grace. The process of conversion could not wait upon the slow and deliberate pace of Christian nurture and education. Frontier revivalism was in a hurry, therefore the *old means* for spiritual renewal, Word and sacrament, must make way for *new measures* in order to effect a quicker transformation of life. "New Measures" therefore included the *exhorter*, an evangelist who could picture the awful estate of the lost sinner in such vivid terms as to arrest his attention. When the sinner was brought to a state of deep spiritual concern, he was invited to the *anxious bench*, usually a seat in front of the assembly where he would be surrounded by a circle of converted brethren who would "pray him through" to spiritual clarity and release. The *camp meeting* and the *protracted meeting* were designed to bring crowds of sinners together in order that they might be manipulated and ultimately saved. The emotional explosion and physical phenomena which invariably accompanied these revival experiences were looked upon as a visible and palpable visitation of the Holy Spirit, which thereafter became the very ground for Christian certainty. *Revival songs* which stressed the subjective side of religion were an important part of "New Measures," and the *testimonial session* was designed to strengthen the resolve of the saved and incite the penitence of the unsaved. In this connection, it must be borne in mind that the technique of "New Measures" was but the external manifestation and practical application of Edwardean theology, to which reference has been made in the preceding chapter.²

² *Supra*, page 33. For an interesting account of revivalism in America and its attendant practices see William Warren Sweet, *Revivalism in America, Its Origin, Growth and Decline*, New York, 1944.

The salutary effects which "new measures" revivalism often had on hardened and calloused sinners, and, indeed upon whole communities, were often so apparent that many Lutherans, both pastors and laymen, had become convinced that here was a mode of church activity uniquely suited to an American environment, which Lutherans in this new land must adopt. Accordingly, there were numerous congregations within the General Synod which used "New Measures" as a regular part of their parish programs and some of the most outstanding leaders were gladly known as "new measure men."³

In commenting upon "New Measures" in the Lutheran Church in America, an outstanding student of this phase of our history has declared:

What is known in the history of the Lutheran Church in this country as the "New Measure Movement" was one phase of those successive waves of "revivalistic fervor," attended with much fanaticism, that passed over this country at various times during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That it was an abnormal and unhistorical importation from extra-Lutheran sources, that it was an alien in our midst, will at this day hardly be denied. The phrase, "New Measures," stood for a type and as representing a system of religious activity which in some sections of the church largely supplanted and antagonized methods which had been from the very beginning of its life associated with the genius and development of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. In the fourth and fifth decades of the last century what was technically denominated the "new measure movement" did not stand for a revival of religion in the best use of that word, but rather for certain extravagances which seem to be inseparable from the introduction of certain revivalistic machinery . . . it was associated with solemn tricks for the sake of effect, decision displays at the bidding of the preacher, genuflections and prostrations in the aisle or around the altar, noise and disorder, extravagance and rant, mechanical conversions, justification by feeling rather than by faith, and encouragement to all sorts of fanatical impressions. . . . Such measures were, in those days, popular in all the leading churches of this country, and it is not suprising that in that period of our weakness, with very little literature of a genuinely Lutheran order in the English language, and in view of some of the free-booting methods employed in the efforts to win Lutherans . . . and the strenuous insistence that no one was a Christian unless he had gotten his religion in this tumultuous way, many of our people were swept along with the current until they found the catechism and all other historical

³ Among them Gottlieb Shober, secretary of the Synod of North Carolina, George Lochman, president of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Benjamin Kurtz, editor of the *Lutheran Observer*.

belongings of the Church supplanted by the "anxious bench" and other human and mechanical revivalistic appliances.⁴

In the Synod of Northern Illinois the contest between American nativism and European traditionalism pitted the Americans, led by Francis Springer, against the Scandinavians, led by Esbjörn. To Esbjörn "New Measures" represented a way of carrying on the work of the church which was foreign to his background and training, even though he had participated in the revival movements in Sweden. New Measures involved spiritual renewal not by intensification of the application of the means of grace, but by supplanting them by manipulation techniques and the adoption of the presupposition that church membership must be predicated upon a kind of puritanical "perfectionism" based upon the evidence of an emotional "conversion experience" rather than upon commitment to doctrine as set forth in the historic confessions.

During the first year or two of their association with the Synod of Northern Illinois, while they constituted a minority, the Scandinavians posed no threat to the Americans. But as immigration to Illinois brought new recruits to their ranks, they became increasingly aggressive and demanded one change after another in order to make the Synod conform to their conception of the church. In 1853 they succeeded in changing the doctrinal article of the synodical constitution by striking out the words "mainly correct" as applied to the Augsburg Confession, and the following year inserting the word "correct." At the same time they managed to push through a resolution which altered the basis upon which congregational membership was to be granted. Instead of ascertaining whether or not a prospective member was properly "converted," as envisaged in New Measures, the resolution required doctrinal commitment by asking: "Do you acknowledge the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and practice and the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism as containing a correct summary of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion?" Finally, in 1856, the Scandinavians won a resounding victory over the Americans when the Synod of Northern Illinois went on record as being opposed to the *Definite Platform* of S. S. Schmucker, which was a definitive blueprint of American Lutheranism, espousing New Measures and a serious modification of traditional Lutheranism.⁵

⁴ "The Genesis of the New Measure Movement in the Lutheran Church in this Country," by Professor David H. Bauslin, *The Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. XL, July, 1910, pp. 360ff.

⁵ See *Minutes of the Third Session of the Synod of Northern Illinois*, October 13, 1853. *Minutes of the Fourth Session of the Synod of Northern Illinois*,

The mounting aggressiveness of the Scandinavians was virtually a red flag of defiance to the Americans, and Francis Springer, who had been president of the Synod of Northern Illinois for several years, arose to do battle. Writing in the *Evangelical Review*⁶ and the *Lutheran Observer*⁷, he asserted that he was a staunch American and "a pleader for the ascendancy of Americans in America—in church, state, science, literature and everything else." He was not an American, said he, "with European understanding, affections and will; not a Lutheran with proclivities in the direction of Rome." He, to be sure, did not wish to belittle those who disagreed with him, nor desire to cast aspersions upon the Scandinavian immigrants, but he demanded that "in America they be Americans—at least so far as not to obtrude the impracticable and cumbrous churchliness of Europe upon the new and nobler nationality to which they have fled." He lamented "the haughty spirit" of the immigrant brethren which "shortens the decalogue and lengthens the creed." The Synod of Northern Illinois was an American institution intended to express a broad ecumenical spirit. The Scandinavians, by imposing their European standards, had made it a narrow, sectarian fellowship in which none but "hyperorthodox symbolists" could feel at home. Against such un-American pressures Francis Springer felt compelled to protest.⁸

Lutheran Nationalism

The tension between American nativism and European traditionalism, however, was only one of the disturbing factors in Illinois. *Nationalistic loyalties and cultural differences* also proved to be barriers across which co-operation and mutuality were difficult to achieve.

The Synod of Northern Illinois was comprised of Americans, Germans, Norwegians, and Swedes. These groups were the heirs of particular religious and cultural traditions which they cherished and were reluctant, often for very practical reasons, to surrender. This does not mean that the immigrant groups sought to preserve their nationalistic traditions by encouraging a spirit of isolation and exclusiveness. On the contrary, it was generally acknowledged that an eventual Americanization was both inevitable and wholesome, for the children of the immigrants, reared in an American environment,

September 8, 1854. The Dixon meeting is reported in *The Missionary*, November 13, 1856.

⁶ July, 1859.

⁷ March 2, May 25 and June 8, 1859.

⁸ See comments by Norelius regarding the "New Measure" controversy in *Tidskrift för teologi*, V, 1903, p. 197.

would have little time or enthusiasm for the folkways of Europe. In the meantime, however, the church must be concerned with the fathers and mothers whose formative years had been spent in the old homeland. Thus, the process of Americanization must be given time and patience. Among the Swedes, Hasselquist was the most outspoken advocate of Americanization, while Esbjörn became increasingly critical of the American situation.⁹ To expect the immigrants to change overnight, as Francis Springer seemed to demand, was unrealistic and uncharitable.

Within a dozen years after the formation of the Synod of Northern Illinois the tensions caused by nationalistic differences had become so acute that some members of the association wanted to dissolve the synod and organize the work among Lutherans along purely nationalistic lines. Here again Francis Springer appeared as a spokesman for the Americans and L. P. Esbjörn for the Scandinavians. The first overtures were made surreptitiously by both sides. Springer corresponded secretly with his friends, proposing that, "we organize a new synod, to be styled the English Lutheran Synod of Illinois, on the same basis as that of the Evangelical Lutheran General Synod of the United States of America . . . the territory which the new Synod will embrace will of course, for the present, be the entire state of Illinois."¹⁰ The motivation behind this proposal was "that the difference of language and nationality is so great that union and co-operation are unpleasant and difficult . . . that we have four languages, that they are not understood by all, and that it is not pleasant to sit and listen to what we do not understand. . . . That there is such a difference in the education, manners and customs of our different men and parties that it is difficult and unpleasant to work together. . . . We could do more good if separated—each party could then have its own way, and carry on its own measures with more vigor. . . . Synods would be more pleasant if all members used the same language, and were of one way of thinking. . . . The differences in doctrinal views demand that we separate."¹¹

At a special meeting of the United Rock River and Mendota Con-

⁹ In an article in *Hemlandet*, June 22, 1858, Hasselquist urged his readers to learn English by subscribing to American newspapers, for if the Swedish Lutheran Church was to survive it would have to learn the language of the land. In correspondence with Eric Norelius, Esbjörn reveals his growing dissatisfaction with American doctrine and methods. See letter to Norelius, Andover, March 7, 1857, Springfield, December 1859, and Andover, January 7, 1862, *Norelius Collection*, Augustana Archives, Rock Island.

¹⁰ See article by Harkey, *The Olive Branch*, February, 1860; *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. IX, pp. 96-103.

¹¹ See *Appeal*, *Ibid.*, pp. 76-82.

ferences of the Synod of Northern Illinois, held at Dixon, December 6-8, 1859, Springer was unmasked, his secret letters were made public, and he was charged by Dr. Simon Harkey with sedition, seeking to alienate the English congregations from the Synod and disrupt the work which the association had undertaken. Under the leadership of Professor Harkey, the convention resolved to approve the existing union of Lutherans and the confessional basis to which it was committed, while it condemned all efforts to organize a new synod. After this decisive defeat of the "American separatists," Harkey and eight other leaders signed an appeal, which was published in the *Olive Branch*, calling upon all ministers and congregations to reject all subversive activity and to rally to the support of the Lutheran synods which now united various Lutheran groups in the west in common tasks and mutual help.¹² In their own defense the Springerites asserted that it was the "highhanded and overbearing manner of the Scandinavians" which was responsible for disunity in Illinois, and their angry charges in the public press served only to further alienate the Scandinavians and aggravate the breach of misunderstanding and suspicion.¹³

Esbjörn was both more cautious and devious than Springer. He took very few friends into his confidence, but in his correspondence with his intimate friend, Eric Norelius, he began broaching the subject of independent work among the Scandinavians as early as the summer of 1859.¹⁴

Because of Esbjörn's relationship with *Illinois State University*, first as a solicitor for funds for the Scandinavian professorship, and later as the occupant of the professorial chair, he sustained a closer and more intimate contact with his American brethren than any other Scandinavian. He was therefore more subject to the cross winds of disagreement and tension, and his sensitive and suspicious nature made it all the easier for him to detect both real and imaginary evils in the synodical union. His correspondence during 1859 indicates that there was a good deal of talk among the Scandinavians regarding separation. Finally, in a letter to Norelius, dated Springfield, January 26, 1860, Esbjörn openly proposed that the Scandinavians take matters into their own hands and, without asking for leave or permission from any quar-

¹² *The Appeal* is given in full in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. IX, pp. 76-82.

¹³ See articles in *Lutheran Observer*, by Springer, March 2, 1860, by "Illinoian," March 2, 1860, by "An Egyptian," February 3, 1860, and by E. Fair, March 23, 1860.

¹⁴ Letter to Norelius, dated Center Ridge, Mercer Co., Illinois, July 28, 1859, in *Tidskrift för teologi*, Vol. I, 1899, p. 307f.

ter, simply announce their withdrawal from both the General Synod and the Synod of Northern Illinois, and establish an entirely independent Scandinavian association.¹⁵

Esbjörn's caution in the matter of separation up to this time was dictated by the differences of opinion among the Scandinavians themselves. Both Hasselquist and Erland Carlsson were content to remain in the Synod of Northern Illinois, since that body was now committed to the Augsburg Confession, and they did not wholly share Esbjörn's suspicions of the Americans.¹⁶ Any action that would cause a rupture among the Scandinavians at this juncture would be disastrous, and must be avoided at all costs. Therefore, Esbjörn must prepare his strategy with care. His abrupt resignation from the professorship and withdrawal from Springfield in March, 1860, was an unexpected turn of events which neither Esbjörn nor his friends had foreseen. Nevertheless, it accomplished the purpose which had so long been premeditated.¹⁷

Old Lutherans and New Lutherans

Finally, the Synod of Northern Illinois was rent by the *theological disagreements* which disturbed practically the entire Lutheran Church in America during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The theological controversy involved two burgeoning schools of thought, the liberal, puritanical *American Lutheranism*, on the one hand, and the rigidly conservative and fundamentalistic "Old Lutheranism," on the other. The basic issue at stake was the authority and normative character of the historic Lutheran confessions.

The national leader of the liberal *American Lutherans* was Samuel Simon Schmucker, professor of theology at the Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and prominent member of the General Synod. Schmucker was the product of a pietistic home where the ideals of revivalism were warmly espoused, and of a theological training at Princeton University under Reformed influences, both of which found expression in his later life and teachings. As one of the architects of the General Synod, Schmucker was deeply interested in fostering a greater unity among Lutherans in America. But he was also vitally concerned about promoting greater unity among Protestant Christians

¹⁵ Letter in *Ibid.*, p. 314.

¹⁶ See Hasselquist's letter to Norelius, dated Galesburg, Illinois, April 18, 1859, *Norelius Collection*, Augustana Archives.

¹⁷ A full account of the Scandinavian association with the Synod of Northern Illinois is given in Norelius, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 788-815.

everywhere, and to this end he exerted great efforts on behalf of the *Evangelical Alliance*, a world-wide association of Protestant denominations organized in London in 1846.

As Schmucker became increasingly acquainted with the ecumenical movement as expressed in the *Evangelical Alliance*, he was convinced that Christian disunity throughout the world has developed because men have too narrowly interpreted the Scriptures, that they have emphasized too heavily the particular and unique theological viewpoint which distinguished their own denominational position. The way, therefore, to overcome disunity and achieve greater Christian concord is for Protestants to discover the broad areas of their agreement and let the major emphasis fall there. Such areas of agreement would constitute the *theological fundamentals*, which were to be considered as authoritative and normative for faith and practice while the areas of theological disagreement, involving unique and particularistic denominational emphases would constitute the *nonfundamentals*, about which there must be freedom and toleration. The classic definition of "fundamental Christianity" was the ancient Apostles' Creed, and any theological formulation by any denomination which was a substantive addition to the doctrines expressed in the *Apostolicum* was nonfundamental. Schmucker declared that the longer and more refined a confessional statement becomes, the more exclusive will be its effect.

In a treatise which Schmucker read before the Synod of Western Pennsylvania in 1840, entitled, "Portraiture of Lutheranism," he applied his basic premises to the Lutheran Church and suggested that if the Lutheran Church in America were to become a part of a larger, unified Christian community, it must suffer the following improvements: (1) It must commit itself, not to the authority of church fathers, including Luther, but "to the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible." (2) The doctrine of the Presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper is obsolete and must be rejected, for "there is no presence of the glorified human nature of the Savior, either substantial or supernatural in the Eucharist . . . bread and wine are merely symbolic representations of the Savior's absent body, by which we are reminded of his sufferings." (3) The Lutheran practice of confession in preparation for Holy Communion is a Romish practice which ought to be relinquished. (4) A new systematic adjustment and treatment of Lutheran doctrine should be undertaken to create a more harmonious and integrated doctrinal system in accord with modern knowledge. (5) The advisory powers of the General Synod should be changed in favor of a more rigid and authoritative form of polity. (6) All that should be

required of a minister in terms of confessional subscription is the pledge that "the Bible is God's Word and that the fundamental doctrines of the Bible are taught in a manner substantially (or mainly) correct in the Augsburg Confession."¹⁸

Schmucker's purpose in this presentation is evident. He was endeavoring to promote the interests of ecumenicity and was cultivating the support of his own denomination. To insure this support it was necessary to accomplish certain measures. First, he must discredit the authority of those church fathers whose pronouncements had been the cause of division. Secondly, it was necessary to repudiate those doctrines which were peculiar and distinctive of the Lutheran Church, especially such as related to baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the third place, he must establish a confessional norm, the basis of which would be broad enough to include all shades of opinion. That norm was to be the Bible, from which the common confessional symbol of Christendom, the Apostles' Creed, had been derived. This confessional symbol would be the point of union, for it was brief enough to avoid formulations which would be too explicit, and long enough to include the fundamental truths. In the fourth place, the Lutheran Church must be inspired to lead the way in this great kingdom endeavor, even as it had in breaking the tyranny of the papacy in the sixteenth century.

One of Schmucker's most able and trusted lieutenants was his brother-in-law, Samuel Sprecher, for twenty-five years the president of Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio. Sprecher, who was a more astute politician than Schmucker, insisted on the necessity of a positive affirmation which would clearly define the position of the "new and improved Lutheranism," and urged that a bold, forthright statement be formulated setting forth the exact tenets of the "new theology" as over against the traditional viewpoint of conservative Lutheranism. A negative approach would prove inadequate; what was needed was a positive declaration which would define the ground upon which the opponents of conservatism stood, and which therefore would delineate the battle front between the two camps.¹⁹

Such a definitive declaration finally appeared in 1855, bearing the title *Definite Synodical Platform*, and though there were no authors' names attached to the forty-two-page brochure, it was later owned as the creation of Schmucker, Sprecher, and Benjamin Kurtz, editor of

¹⁸ S. S. Schmucker, "Portraiture of Lutheranism" in *The American Lutheran Church, Historically, Doctrinally, and Practically Delineated*, Philadelphia, 1852.

¹⁹ See Adolph Spaeth, *Charles Porterfield Krauth*, I, New York, 1898, pp. 346ff.

the *Lutheran Observer* in Baltimore. This publication was indeed a definite and clear declaration of faith and practice which was being submitted to the General Synod and all district synods for adoption. The *Platform* contained four planks: (1) A pledge to the Old and New Testaments as the only infallible rule and guide of faith and practice. (2) The Apostles' Creed. (3) The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. (4) An American Recension of the Augsburg Confession. The significance of the *Platform* lies in its attitude toward the Augsburg Confession and the other confessional symbols of the Lutheran Church. The *Platform* flatly rejected all the Lutheran confessions except the Augsburg Confession, and the *Augustana* was received with serious reservations, for it was charged with a number of grave errors. These errors were pointed out and corrected in an abridged, amended version of the *Augustana*, called the *American Recension*. The Recension rejects five alleged errors of the original, which were: (1) The approval of the ceremonies of the Mass, that is, the Communion Service as drafted by Luther (Article XXIV). (2) The retention and commendation of private confession (Article XI). (3) The denial of the divine obligation of the Sabbath (Article XXVIII). (4) The doctrine of baptismal regeneration (Article II). (5) The doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist (Article X). These errors were corrected in the *American Recension* because they represent practices and beliefs of an earlier age "which have long since been regarded by the great mass of our churches as unscriptural and the remnants of Romish error." As a supplement to the regular preaching and teaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments, the Lutheran Church in America must adopt the more effective *new measures* techniques of revivalism, and the traditional spirit of confessional exclusiveness must give way to the more modern interpretation of Christianity which affords more freedom to the individual in both his worship and in the definition of his faith. In short, the Lutheran Church must not be content to stand immovable on the confessional ground of the sixteenth century, but must move forward with the times, willing to become more free and liberal. In this way it would more nearly approximate other Protestant churches in America, and unity could be more quickly and easily achieved. This modification of faith and practice Schmucker called *American Lutheranism*; it was this viewpoint which was connoted by the phrase "mainly correct" as related to the Augsburg Confession.²⁰

²⁰ *Definite Platform, Doctrinal and Disciplinary, for Evangelical Lutheran District Synods, Constructed in Accordance with the Principles of the General Synod*, Philadelphia, 1855.

In the Synod of Northern Illinois it was men like Francis Springer who were the champions and advocates of Schmucker's *American Lutheranism*. It was this kind of theology which, in their judgment, was most suited to their environment and which must be made to prevail in the Midwest. To this end they dedicated their untiring efforts.

Bitterly opposed to Schmucker and his American Lutheranism were the staunchly conservative and orthodox *Old Lutherans*, who insisted that the historic confessions of the sixteenth century were pure and true expositions of Scripture and must therefore be literally accepted as definitive of Christian faith and practice. Just as the gospel, said they, is not changed or altered by the exigencies of historical accident, so also the confessions are unaffected by the changing times. The confessions must be accepted in letter and spirit without compromise or revision, omission or addition, *not in so far as they agree with Scripture, but because they agree with the Word of God.*

The matrix of this viewpoint was the so-called *Theology of Repristination* emanating out of Germany during the nineteenth century, the chief spokesmen for which were August Vilmar, professor at the University of Marburg, Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg, professor at the University of Berlin, and C. A. Capari, professor at the University of Oslo, Norway. In reaction against the corroding effects of rationalism and skepticism, these men were persuaded that religious and spiritual renewal within Protestantism was predicated upon a *recovery of the true message of Scripture as it is presented in the Lutheran confessional writings of the sixteenth century and interpreted by the Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century.* In his treatise entitled *Die Theologie der Tatsachen wider die Theologie der Rhetorik* (A Theology of Facts versus a Theology of Rhetoric) Vilmar defined the aim of the Theology of Repristination thus: "Theology must know that she has nothing new to say, nothing new to discover, but her task is to preserve the spiritual treasure that has been given in Holy Scripture and received by the church, in such form that it may be transmitted to future servants of the church undiminished, certain, and in its most useful form."²¹

Vilmar's meaning is clear. The confessions, as explicated by seventeenth-century Lutheran scholasticism, constitute the "most useful form" of Scriptural truth, and must therefore be transmitted "undiminished, certain," that is to say, *repristinated* in terms of being revived and restored as the norm of religious authority. Any endeavor

²¹ Quotation from J. L. Neve, *A History of Christian Doctrine*, Vol. II, Philadelphia, 1946, p. 129.

to read the confessions in the light of changing historical circumstances and increasing human knowledge must be met with inflexible intransigence, for any such endeavors must of necessity be corruptive of the purity of the truth expressed in the confessions. Rigid conformity to the letter is the only safeguard for the spirit of confessional truth. Because of its uncompromising reference to its own standards of truth and its unwillingness to subject these standards to critical re-evaluation the *Theology of Repristination* has been variously dubbed as "fundamentalistic orthodoxy" and "Lutheran fundamentalism."

The foremost exponents of the *Theology of Repristination* in America during the nineteenth century were Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, the unrivaled leader of the Missouri Lutherans, and J. A. A. Grabau, founder of the Buffalo Synod in Ohio. Although these men and their respective church bodies failed to agree on such points of doctrine as the church and the ministry, they were equally committed to a strict confessionalism, as evidenced in the doctrinal article of the congregational constitutions adopted by each synod. The constitution of the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Buffalo became a model for the Buffalo Synod, the doctrinal article of which provided that:

Sec. 2. This congregation holds itself to the pure doctrine of the Holy Scripture, Old and New Testaments, as to the infallible Word of the Living God and therefore as the only divine precept and rule of faith and life for all its members.

Sec. 3. Inasmuch as the pure doctrine of the Holy Scripture is set forth and contained in the confessions of the Lutheran Church, namely; in the Apostolic, Nicene, Athanasian creeds, in the U. A. (Unaltered Augsburg) Confession of the year 1530, its Apology, the Smalcald Articles, both the Catechisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord, therefore the congregation adheres to these confessions and holds itself thereunto as to the sum of pure doctrine according to which all other writings must be judged.²²

The constitution drawn up by Pastor Walther for the Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Louis became a model for congregations in the Missouri Synod. The doctrinal article stated that:

Sec. 3. In our congregations shall be recognized all the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments as God's revealed Word and all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as the extracted Form and Norm of the Word of God, according to which, since these are taken out of God's Word, not only the

²² Quoted in Virgilius Ferm, *The Crisis in American Lutheran Theology*, New York, 1927, p. 125.

doctrines of our Church shall be held and examined but also all occurring doctrinal and religious disputes shall be judged and regulated. These are: the three chief Symbols, the unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology to the same, the Smalcald Articles, Dr. Luther's smaller and large Catechisms, the Formula of Concord and the Visitation-Articles.

Sec. 4. No one may, moreover, become a member, still less an official, of this congregation, nor have a share in the claims of a parishioner, other than he who: (a) is baptized; (b) holds himself to all the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments as to the only divine precept and rule of faith and life, and (c) is acquainted with, amidst indeed a present lack of knowledge of all the above mentioned Symbolical Books, at least the Augsburg Confession and the small Catechism of Luther, and holds himself thereto. . .

Sec. 8. The incumbency in the congregation may be intrusted only to such a preacher who holds himself to all the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments, as the revealed Word of God, and to all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church derived therefrom, of which Section 3 has mentioned, upon which the same, as well as the schoolmaster, is bound by his calling.²³

The significance of men like Walther and Grabau lies not only in the fact that they founded in America powerful centers of conservative Lutheranism, but that through their preaching and writing they did much to crystallize conservative opinion outside their own ranks. Eric Norelius, for example, prepared a treatise in 1858, opposing the unionistic tendencies of Hasselquist. This document reflects the same arguments and line of reasoning which appear in Walther's diatribes. He asserts, as Walther often did, that outward unity among Christians can be had only if there is an inner unity of spirit, faith, and doctrine. Apart from such inner unity there can be no peace. To maintain association with those whom we know to be in error is tantamount to tempting God, even though such association is maintained in the hope of bringing about the conversion of those who are in error. It is like a rat who chews on a steel file and rejoices that the file is giving way as she sees the filings drop to the ground, only to discover at last to her sorrow that the filings were bits of her own broken teeth.²⁴

A growing confessional conservatism was especially marked in the case of Esbjörn. His strife with Unonius, Hedstrom, and Palmquist

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

²⁴ See, *The Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. XII, 1933, pp. 368ff. The Missouri viewpoint which Norelius particularly reiterates was enunciated by Walther in his book, *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt*, St. Louis, 1852, pp. 103ff.

had driven him to a renewed study of the Lutheran confessions and a clearer awareness of the theological differences separating the Lutheran and Reformed traditions.²⁵ But his relationships with the Norwegians of the Wisconsin Synod, led by Preus, Stub, and Clausen, served to confront both Esbjörn and his Scandinavian colleagues in the Synod of Northern Illinois with the challenge of conservatism as perhaps nothing else did. The Wisconsin Lutherans were strongly influenced by Walther and frequently published with approval his articles and sermons in their newspaper, *Kirkelig Maanedstidende*. In the columns of this journal the Scandinavians in Illinois were singled out for special attention and treatment. They were reminded, again and again, that their association with the General Synod, through membership in the district Synod of Northern Illinois, with its equivocal subscription to the Augsburg Confession as "mainly correct," constituted nothing less than an outright denial of true Lutheranism.²⁶ Esbjörn and his party were repeatedly urged to "come out from among them," to purge themselves of all such "unionistic association," and to take an unqualified stand on the historic confessions of the church.

A climax in these relationships was reached at a Conference between the Wisconsin Norwegians and the Scandinavians in Illinois, held at Chicago, July 7-8, 1859, at which the issue of "unionism" was clearly drawn. Each side confessed the sins of the other and very little was accomplished to establish peace and harmony, and open conflict, aired in the Lutheran press, was soon resumed. But the effect of this face-to-face meeting was to drive home to Esbjörn and his colleagues the imperative necessity of differentiating with no equivocation their own theological position in contrast to that of "American Lutheranism." There would indeed come a time when the Scandinavians would also be faced with the issue of differentiating their tradition in contrast to that of ultraconservatism, but at this juncture it was a question of turning to the right or the left, and the Scandinavians in Illinois chose the former course.²⁷

²⁵ See Esbjörn's letters to Hasselquist and Norelius in Norelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 143f. and 159f.

²⁶ See issue of 1858, Vol. III, Number 6.

²⁷ A. A. Stromberg, "Early Efforts at Scandinavian Church Union in America," *Year-Book of The Swedish Historical Society of America*, Vol. IX, 1923-1924, p. 18.

Experiment in Co-operation

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION is intimately connected with the history of the Augustana Lutheran Church. From beginning to end the educational theme may be seen, like a red thread in a tapestry, running through the whole story of the Church. It was the concern for Christian education which led the Scandinavian Lutherans in the Middle West into their first co-operative efforts in America, and which provided the chief motivation for the establishment of an independent church body. Indeed, the origin of the Augustana Church cannot be properly understood apart from the story of the educational venture which centered in Springfield, Illinois.

Illinois State University

All of the tensions which permeated the Synod of Northern Illinois came into focus in connection with the co-operative effort related to the "little school with the big name," *Illinois State University*.

This school had been founded in 1849 at Hillsboro, Illinois, by the Synod of Illinois as a training center for pastors and teachers in the Middle West. To give the school a more strategic location, it was moved to Springfield in 1852 and its name changed from *Hillsboro College* to *Illinois State University*. Joint ownership and support were vested in the Synod of Illinois, which comprised the southern section of the State, and the Synod of Northern Illinois, which extended from the southern boundary of Warren County northward. Pastor Esbjörn was elected a member of the first Board of Trustees in 1852.¹

No group in Illinois recognized more clearly the imperative need of raising up an indigenous American ministry than the Scandinavians. Esbjörn and his Swedish colleagues were haunted by the memory of the dissolution which occurred among the Delaware congregations in an earlier period because they depended too heavily for their spiritual and religious resources upon the mother church in Europe. This must not happen again. In their determination to furnish for themselves an American ministry, Esbjörn and his friends had first looked to Capital

¹ See report on "Illinois State University," *The Missionary*, October, 1852. See also "An Important Letter, Lutherans read and ponder," *Lutheran Observer*, March 19, 1852.

University at Columbus, Ohio, and had sent Eric Norelius to that school to complete his studies in preparation for the ministry. But this connection had not proven feasible. Thus it was that at a meeting of the Mississippi Conference, held at Andover, December 1, 1854, the Swedes decided henceforth to send their students to Illinois State University, and to receive offerings in all congregations for the support of the institution.² The Synod of Northern Illinois responded to this action by voting to establish at the school a Scandinavian Professorship for the special training of Scandinavian youth, and called Pastor Esbjörn to be the financial solicitor for the new department.³

The financial goal for an endowment for the professorship was set at \$10,000, and Esbjörn resigned his pastorate in Andover, setting out immediately upon this formidable undertaking. Traveling from settlement to settlement, interviewing innumerable people, collecting fifty cents here and a dollar there, but rarely receiving as much as ten dollars from any individual, he raised within a few months \$2,147.50, of which \$870 was in cash.⁴ Having visited most of the Swedish and Norwegian communities, and suffering from ill health, Esbjörn asked to be relieved of his duties as solicitor in the fall of 1856, and accepted a call to the congregation at Princeton, Illinois.⁵

While Esbjörn and the Scandinavians were busying themselves with preparations for launching the professorship, the Americans in the Synod of Northern Illinois were becoming apprehensive lest the aggressive Scandinavians use the professorship as a means of gaining control of the University and ultimately of the entire Synod. Hence, Springer and his associates requested a special meeting of the Synod to determine the specific nature and character of the new professorship. This special meeting was held at Geneva, Illinois, May 8, 1856, and since the Scandinavians and their conservative henchmen were in the majority, it was decided:

1. That the Scandinavian Professorship to be established by this Synod is to be a theological one . . .
2. That said Professor be required solemnly to promise to teach according to the Word of God and the Augsburg Confession before he should be installed into his office or be entitled to the rights and privileges of such Professorship.⁶

² Minutes of the Mississippi Conference, translation in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, Rock Island, 1944, p. 99.

³ *Minutes of the Synod of Northern Illinois*, Waverly, Iowa, October, 1855.

⁴ A list of the donors appeared in *Hemlandet*, May 15 and 31, 1856.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1856.

⁶ *Minutes of Synod of Northern Illinois*, Geneva, Illinois, May 8-9, 1856.

This was precisely what the Springerites had feared. By making the professorship at Springfield a theological chair, the incumbent would be able to spread the virus of "symbolism" throughout the school and thus infect the Synod with an ever-increasing number of men committed to a "Europeanized Lutheranism."

At the regularly scheduled convention of the Synod at Dixon, Illinois, that same fall, the Americans sought to persuade the delegation to rescind the action taken at Geneva, but were soundly beaten in the voting. Indeed the convention not only gave final approval to the *theological character* of the professorship, but resolved also to hand over to the Scandinavians the responsibility for both the conduct and support of the professorship.⁷ The Scandinavians, who were now in full control of this new educational post, appealed to their congregations with renewed vigor for the fullest measure of support, and at a meeting of the United Scandinavian Conference, held at Rockford, September 28, 29, 1857, nominated L. P. Esbjörn as Scandinavian professor at Springfield.⁸ The nomination was favorably acted upon by the Synod of Northern Illinois, and concurrent action was also taken by the Synod of Illinois and the University Board of Trustees.⁹

Esbjörn accepted the call to become the Scandinavian Professor at Springfield and agreed to "devote three fourths of the year at the institution, and if health permits, the other quarter as agent for the endowment, and that he be allowed a salary of \$700 a year as Professor and \$50 extra as agent, besides his traveling expenses." When the school opened its doors for the new term in the fall of 1858, Esbjörn was on hand to begin his career as theological mentor for Scandinavian youth in the Midwest.¹⁰

"The Babylonian Captivity"

By the time Esbjörn assumed his teaching post in Springfield in the fall of 1858, he had been in America long enough to have acquired a good command of the English language. Thus, he was able to com-

⁷ *Minutes of the Synod of Northern Illinois*, Dixon, Illinois, October 8-13, 1856.

⁸ *Minutes of Chicago and Mississippi Conferences*, Rockford, Illinois, September 28, 29, 1857, translated in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 126ff.

⁹ *Minutes of the Synod of Northern Illinois*, Cedarville, Illinois, September 28, 1857. Abstract of Proceedings of the Board of Trustees of Illinois State University, in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. IX, p. 64f. See also *Minutes of meeting of United Scandinavian Conferences*, Princeton, Illinois, September 10-14, 1858, translated in *Ibid.*, Vol. X, p. 144.

¹⁰ *Minutes, Synod of Northern Illinois at its Eighth Annual Convention*, held at Mendota, Illinois, LaSalle County, September 14-20, 1858.

municate freely and fluently with both the English-speaking students as well as with those who were limited to the Scandinavian languages. His European studies had also given him considerable scientific competence, especially in mathematics, chemistry, and astronomy. It was natural, therefore, that the University administration would want to make as broad use of his talents as possible. As a consequence, Esbjörn was assigned to teach courses in chemistry, astronomy, and natural philosophy, in addition to his courses in theology and the Scandinavian languages. In fact, he soon discovered that the courses not specifically related to theology demanded so much of his time and energy that there was little opportunity to give proper attention to his major interest.¹¹

At the end of the first school year Esbjörn reported to a meeting of the United Scandinavian Conference in Geneseo, August, 1859, that he had conducted eleven class hours a week in the "extra courses" and had given only three hours a week to his "theological classes" in catechetics, Jewish antiquities, and Greek New Testament. The language courses in Swedish and Norwegian had been condensed into another four hours and fitted into the weekly schedule as time and circumstances permitted. On Saturday afternoons special linguistic exercises were held with the students taking part in debates, declamations, and the reading of essays with Esbjörn acting as judge and moderator.

The devotional life of the Scandinavian students was cared for in the following manner:

Both for edification and for practice, services with Swedish and Norwegian sermons and simultaneous singing out of both hymnals, using the same melody, have been held every Sunday afternoon, likewise one evening each week a so-called prayer meeting. At these devotional exercises the Scandinavian students have usually served, and almost without exception in a true and edifying spirit. After each service both pastor and comrades have presented such remarks regarding the sermon as seemed necessary. In this connection I cannot do otherwise than deplore the fact that no Scandinavian Lutheran congregation is found in Springfield, which could give the necessary festive and impressive tone to these practice efforts and through mutual contact between congregation and students support and develop the true Christian and Lutheran spirit; also [I deplore] that opportunity for practical exercise in catechising is lacking, as Luther's Catechism is not used in any

¹¹ Report to the United Scandinavian Conference, Minutes of the meeting held in Geneseo, Illinois, August 31-September 5, 1859, in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 162ff.

Sunday school in the city (with the exception perhaps of the German Lutheran congregation).¹²

The latter portion of Esbjörn's report is especially interesting, since it is in this section that the new professor is most sharply critical of his position. He points out that the financial situation at the school had been exceedingly trying. His own income had fallen far short of the promised \$700, with only \$428 having been received. If such hap-hazard support continues, says he, "it will not be possible for me to continue to take care of the work, and to live with a large family in such an expensive city as Springfield, and to purchase the many books which are quite necessary in order that I may take care of my work in a proper and active manner." Moreover, the whole Scandinavian student body had been in extremely straitened circumstances—"they have sometimes actually been in want. Had not considerable ingatherings for this purpose been made at the General Synod in Pittsburgh it would have been quite impossible to carry them through." But sadder still was the unsatisfactory way the treasurer of the school had handled the endowment funds for the professorship. An unsecured loan had been made to a Mr. E. K. Ulrich of Springfield in the amount of \$456.70, and an additional sum of \$253.96 had been left idle in the treasurer's accounts without being invested so as to earn interest. Furthermore, it is evident from the action taken by the Conference that the Scandinavians were also dissatisfied with the type of theological text books which the school expected Esbjörn to use. There was apparently some suspicion that the Scandinavian students were being subjected to the virus of liberal "American Lutheranism." Nevertheless, Esbjörn concludes his official report with a plea for continued and greater support of the school and the professorship, saying, "We have set our hands to the plough and we must not look back, if we would conform to God's kingdom and through God's grace become the means of making others conformable thereto."¹³

The reaction of the United Conference to Esbjörn's first report is noteworthy. In view of the dire financial need at Springfield, the Conference resolved to redouble all efforts to gather more funds to alleviate the distress. It then went on record to state that:

We are sorry to learn that more than one half of the time of our Professor has been taken up in teaching other branches, foreign to his duties as contemplated in his assignment, therefore, Resolved:

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 163.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 164f.

1. That we respectfully but earnestly request the Trustees and Faculty of said University, as well as our Professor, to see to it that this is not done in the future.

2. That as in the language of the fundamental Resolution on which said Professorship was established, "the Scandinavian Professorship is a Theological one, and the object contemplated is to qualify young men for the gospel ministry among our Scandinavian brethren." We therefore request that our Professor shall use orthodox text books in Church History, Dogmatics, Symbolics and Pastoral Theology in our Scandinavian languages, as long as the wants of our churches require use of these languages.¹⁴

Regarding the handling of the endowment funds for the professorship the Conference had this to say,

The Committee finds with great regret that from the fund which amounts to \$1,382.40, \$456.70 has been loaned out to Mr. E. K. Ulrich of Springfield without corresponding legal security. Further, the Committee finds that the treasurer holds \$253.96 of the same money, which at least since last winter is lying in the treasury without earning interest, which cannot be regarded by the Conference otherwise than as a misuse of the Scandinavian Professorship fund.¹⁵

In view of these circumstances the Conference resolved that:

Whereas the funds of our Scandinavian Professorship have hitherto been delivered over to the Treasurer of Illinois State University, and whereas we are convinced that it is essential to our success in this undertaking that this fund be left in the sole control of a Committee of our own members, therefore, Resolved:

That a committee of three of our Scandinavian brethren be appointed to receive and have full control over the funds already collected, and to be collected by us for the establishment and maintenance of said Professorship, and that Synod be respectfully requested to concur herein and appoint said committee.¹⁶

The spirit of disillusionment and disenchantment pervades these reports and actions. The Scandinavians felt compelled to protect their interests which, in their judgment, were being threatened by antithetical forces in the Synod and the University. It is evident that the tensions between liberals and conservatives, Schmuckerites and "symbolists," between nativists and "foreigners," Americans and "Europeanized" immigrants, between differing cultural patterns, all of which prevailed throughout Lutheranism in Illinois, were now coming into sharper focus in terms of the irritations and aggravations connected with the Springfield professorship. Within the relatively brief period

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

of one school year, Esbjörn was beginning to feel uncomfortable and he took pains to transmit his feelings and sentiments to his countrymen.

In this connection, it is most interesting to note that while Esbjörn officially pleads for continued support of the professorship, and through it, for the school itself, and the United Conference goes on record to undergird the educational venture with more substantial aid, there is already some quiet talk going on among at least a few Scandinavians about pulling out of Springfield and establishing an independent school somewhere else. Just where, when, and by whom this talk first started cannot be accurately ascertained, but it is indubitable that Esbjörn was the first to give clear voice to such sentiments. This is suggested by several letters which Esbjörn wrote to Norelius. The first is dated July 28, 1859, a month *before* the meeting of the United Conference in Geneseo. In the final paragraph of this letter Esbjörn says,

The question of moving the Professorship seems to become increasingly complicated as we think about it. When we meet at our next Conference session we shall have to make further plans in this matter. This much seems clear to me, that Chicago is the only place to which we could think of moving. Neither Geneva nor Princeton will do.¹⁷

A second letter of Esbjörn to Norelius is dated October 26, 1859, about two months *after* the Geneseo meeting. In this communication the writer expresses a growing sense of futility and disillusionment as he declares,

You are right We live here in a kind of Babylonian Captivity, and no one feels it as deeply as I do. After being here only a few weeks, my desire to get away increases, and I entertain—almost against my will—plans about how we can establish our own school in Chicago. During the past few days I have come to believe that with a Scandinavian professor and an instructor in English, together with moderate use of older students as tutors, we should be able to teach a group of Scandinavians in the Swedish church, or in the basement of the Norwegian church in Chicago, especially if we received a little help from the pastors of the city. (Swedish and Norwegians, of course.) Thus, no special buildings would be needed. What do you say about this?¹⁸

A third letter, dated January 12, 1860, contains the following statements:

You have doubtless heard through [O. C. T.] Andrén of my desire to move the whole department away from here. . . . My only wish is that we might leave the "American brethren" to them-

¹⁷ See *Tidskrift för Teologi*, Vol. I, 1899, p. 308.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 308f.

selves, while they speculate about how to handle us. For my part, I have had enough of their ravings.¹⁹

Finally, on February 7, 1860, Esbjörn gives vent to his feelings about the Americans, and speaks of his maturing plans for separation as follows:

. . . during these years we have not had any particular fellowship with the Americans except synodically, under which we and our congregations have gone our own way, and they have gone their way. And when we have sought closer union, we have found that it will not work, and even less so since they openly arise and with greater determination than ever seek to push us aside Worst of all is the deplorable influence being exerted here upon the piety and morals of our own youth. For that reason alone it is impossible to keep our ministerial candidates in a "mixed institution" among American youth who hold all kinds of faiths or no faith at all. And concerning Americanization, there is already too much of it here. For many it is already easier to communicate in English than in Swedish or Norwegian. One and a half year's experience has fully convinced me that all of the Americanization required can be had in a small institution under our own control with an English "tutor" Such a tutor . . . could also teach other subjects. . . . With the help of the Scandinavian pastors in Chicago it would not be difficult to train a score of young men. . . . You cannot imagine how I long for the meeting of the Conference so that I can pour out my heart to the brethren. . . . Just now a student came to visit me who has been here a year and a half. . . . He said that if the (Scandinavian) students are not taken from this place, they will become more like the Americans than anything else.²⁰

The first school year at Springfield had been difficult for Esbjörn and the Scandinavians. The second was destined to be even more distressing. Just about the time school opened for the fall term, the Synod of Northern Illinois met for its convention in Chicago. At this meeting the ill will between the Springerites and the Scandinavians exploded into open warfare, as the Americans sought to amend the synodical constitution to make it conform once more to Schmucker's "American Lutheranism." Failing in this attempt they asked permission to withdraw from the Synod and form an all-English association free from domination by "narrow symbolists." This request, too, was denied them, and the debate became heated as charges and counter charges filled the air. During the proceedings the thirty-one Scandinavian delegates were subjected to the humiliating embarrassment of having

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 199f.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 203f.

themselves pointed out as "a menace to true Lutheranism in America."²¹

The sequel to the Chicago convention was the special meeting of the Americans at Dixon, Illinois, in December, where Dr. Simon Harkey, professor at Springfield, appeared as Springer's opponent and a spokesman for the Scandinavians. To avoid an open rupture in the Synod, however, Harkey proposed to recommend to the next synodical convention the adoption of a constitutional preamble which would acknowledge the existence of doctrinal differences in the Synod and allow for variations of theological interpretation. The proposed preamble stated that,

In adopting the . . . Constitution for the government of the Evangelical Synod of Northern Illinois, and the co-operation of its members in promoting the interests of our Church and the Redeemer's cause, it is well known and distinctly acknowledged that there is not an entire agreement among the members of the Synod on all minor points of doctrine and practice, but we guarantee to each other the most perfect and full liberty of conscience and freedom of speech and action without considering our portion of the Synod pledged to all the doctrinal views of the other.²²

The news of Harkey's proposal regarding the preamble struck the Scandinavians as an unwarranted compromise, a virtual sell-out to the Americans, since such a preamble would in effect nullify the doctrinal article which unequivocally committed the Synod to the Augsburg Confession. Harkey and his intimate associate, Dr. William M. Reynolds, president of Illinois State University, now appeared to the Scandinavians as men who would purchase peace at any price, and whose professions of confessional loyalty were mere lip service.

This revelation explained to Esbjörn the evasiveness which he thought he had detected particularly in Reynolds from the very beginning of his stay in Springfield. Reynolds was both president of the school and pastor of the English Lutheran "college church" in Springfield. Reynolds had invited Esbjörn to become a member of the college church, but Esbjörn had discovered that the congregational constitution omitted any reference to the Augsburg Confession, and he was therefore unwilling to join until the congregation voted to accept the Augsburg Confession and become a genuine Lutheran Church. Pastor Reynolds repeatedly assured the Scandinavian Professor that the desired change would soon be effected, but for some reason this action was never taken. As a result, neither Esbjörn and his family nor the

²¹ *Minutes, Synod of Northern Illinois, Chicago, September 7-13, 1859.*

²² See Norelius, "Förklaringar" in *Tidskrift för teologi*, Vol. V, p. 196f.

majority of the Scandinavian students ever joined any local church in Springfield. This served to create a spirit of mutual estrangement between the president of the school and the Scandinavian members of his official household. For his part, Esbjörn became increasingly dissatisfied with the type of church life which he observed at the college church. The sermons were little more than moral discourses, little or no attention being given to the great Christian doctrines of sin and grace, justification through faith, sanctification through the Holy Spirit, and so forth. Celebration of the Lord's Supper seemed to smack of Reformed influences, and in general the congregational life seemed to lack spiritual depth. On this account Esbjörn felt compelled to hold private services of worship, even celebrating the Lord's Supper in his own home, surrounded by his family and students. At such occasions he warned his listeners of the dangers of false teachers and erroneous doctrines to which they were exposed at the University and at the college church.²³

Meanwhile, the Mississippi Conference convened in Moline, January 11-15, 1860, and in the minutes for the first afternoon session this cryptic entry is recorded, "A large part of the afternoon was spent in discussion and deliberation concerning our position in the Lutheran Church in America."²⁴ Neither Esbjörn nor Norelius attended this meeting, but Norelius, who had intimate knowledge and firsthand information about the course of events, has this word of explanation,

Something was brewing here, but no one wished to or indeed could yet make it plain. Neither Esbjörn nor any one in attendance had any really clear notion just what ought to be done. At first there was no thought of withdrawal from the Synod, but only that the Scandinavian professorship should be removed from Springfield, and become the foundation for a Scandinavian theological seminary. But unexpected developments occurred which no one could have foreseen.²⁵

The Failure of An Experiment

The "unexpected developments" was the sudden resignation of Esbjörn from Springfield and his abrupt removal to Chicago. This turn of events was unexpected and sudden, however, only in the sense that it occurred somewhat sooner and under different circumstances than had

²³ See Article by Esbjörn, *Hemlandet*, August 1, 1860.

²⁴ The complete Minutes of this meeting are given in *Tidskrift för teologi*, Vol. I, 1898, pp. 120-123.

²⁵ *Tidskrift för teologi*, Vol. V, 1903, p. 201.

been contemplated. The alienation between the Scandinavians and Americans in the Synod of Northern Illinois was reflected in the growing estrangement between Esbjörn and the school administration, and his action must be seen as a result and consequence rather than as a cause.

Esbjörn's negative attitude toward existing relationships between the Scandinavians and Americans, his ill-advised criticism of his faculty colleagues in the presence of students, and his charges of heresy at the institution, finally reached the ears of the school authorities. On Friday morning, March 30, 1860, Dr. Reynolds called on Esbjörn at his home and accused him of insubordination and a breach of trust, threatening to "show him up" and make him "regret what he had said to the students." Esbjörn interpreted this as a summons to discipline him before the faculty and bring him to trial before the Synod; therefore, in the course of the heated exchange, Esbjörn resigned his position then and there in order to "get out of reach of Reynolds."²⁶ The following day he confirmed his action by sending a formal written resignation to the presidents of the Board of Trustees of the University, the Synod of Northern Illinois, and the Synod of Illinois.²⁷ Meanwhile, he called the Scandinavian students together in his home, informed them of his resignation, distributed the money he had received for their support, and advised them to sever their relationship with the school.²⁸

Esbjörn's resignation threw the school into an uproar. The authorities tried vainly to negotiate with him, but the Scandinavian professor was adamant. The die was cast and there was no turning back. When Reynolds and Harkey pointed out that the University constitution required six months previous notice of an intention to resign, and that to violate this provision was tantamount to breaking the professorial oath, Esbjörn justified himself by reminding them that this provision had been adopted in September, 1858, a year after his election to the faculty, and constituted therefore *ex post facto* legislation, and furthermore, his oath of allegiance had been given to the Augsburg Confession and not to the University constitution. At an emergency meeting of the Scandinavian students Dr. Reynolds pleaded with them

²⁶ See Esbjörn's letter to Norelius, dated April 3, 1860, *Tidskrift för teologi*, 1898, Vol. I, p. 316.

²⁷ A copy of the resignation in Esbjörn's own handwriting and entitled "A true copy of my resignation of the Scandinavian Professorship in Illinois State University" is preserved in the *Esbjörn Collection*, Augustana Archives, Rock Island.

²⁸ An account of these events is given in *Hemlandet*, August 1, 1860. See also article "The Resignation of Prof. Esbjörn," *Olive Branch*, May, 1860, in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. IX, pp. 112ff.

to remain in school and finish their studies, but every man, except two, indicated his readiness to follow his professor, sharing with him dissatisfaction with the school and the college church.²⁹

Within a few days Esbjörn had packed his belongings and with his family had moved to Chicago, making his home temporarily with Pastor Erland Carlsson. Of the twenty Scandinavian students at Springfield, two remained at the school, one discontinued his studies, and seventeen followed their professor to Chicago, where they were lodged in the school house of the Swedish Lutheran Church. The Sunday school facilities of the Norwegian church were made available for classrooms and study hall, and it was not long before the instruction which had been interrupted at Springfield was resumed in Chicago.³⁰

The United Scandinavian Conference was scheduled to meet in Chicago, April 23, 1860, and Esbjörn realized that the main business of the convention would be concerned with the upheaval at Springfield. He, therefore, used the intervening weeks to prepare his own defense and to communicate with his friends urging them to instruct their congregations to authorize the delegates to vote for withdrawal from the Synod of Northern Illinois and the University, and the establishment of an independent school under the sole control of the Scandinavians.³¹ Doctors Harkey and Reynolds also demanded the right to be heard and to present their side of the story.³²

Thus when the United Conference convened, the little Swedish church on Superior Street where the business sessions were held, became a virtual courtroom with the delegation acting as a jury to pass judgment on the events which had transpired. Two whole days were spent in listening to the evidence. Esbjörn presented a lengthy statement, giving the reasons for his resignation, which may be summarized as:

1. The "Reformed modes of expression" which characterized the tone and spirit of the college church of which Dr. Reynolds was pastor.
2. A teaching schedule which did not allow the Scandinavian professor enough time for theological subjects.
3. Humiliation of the Scandinavian students at the hands of the Americans, to the extent that the Scandinavians had felt compelled

²⁹ See Hemlandet, *op. cit.*

³⁰ See Erland Carlsson's account in *Jubel-Album*, p. 123f.

³¹ Letter to Norelius, April 2, 1860, in *Tidskrift för teologi*, 1903, Vol. V, p. 204, and to Hasselquist, April 2, 1860, in *Hasselquist Collection*, Augustana Archives, Rock Island.

³² Harkey's letter to Hasselquist, March 31, 1860, *Hasselquist Collection*, Augustana Archives, Rock Island.

to seek permission to form their own Scandinavian student association, which, incidentally, had been denied them.

4. Misuse of provisions intended for Scandinavian students.
5. Misappropriation of funds specifically given by Scandinavian congregations for the support of Scandinavian students.
6. The abridgment of full freedom for the Scandinavian professor to give spiritual counsel and exercise pastoral care and supervision over the Scandinavian students.
7. The conviction, after two years of experience, that "the attempt at union and co-operation with those who are not in word and deed fully devoted to the Lutheran Confessions must work out in harm to us and to our congregations in regard to honest piety and pure doctrine."³³

Doctors Harkey and Reynolds also had their day in court. They vehemently protested both the alleged reasons for and the irresponsible manner of Esbjörn's removal from Springfield, and sought to answer some of the charges implicit and explicit in Esbjörn's statement. Their arguments which they presented at that time, and those which subsequently appeared in the Lutheran press, may be summarized as follows:

1. Since the constitution of the University provided for a regular and orderly process in connection with resignation of faculty and staff, Esbjörn's abrupt and irregular action was both illegal and revolutionary and did not reflect the spirit of Christian love.
2. The charge that Esbjörn's freedom to exercise spiritual care and supervision over his students had been abridged was false, and "originates in Prof. Esbjörn's suspicious nature and his want of acquaintance with the manner of conducting literary institutions in America."
3. The ostensible reasons the professor had given for his resignation were chiefly theological and doctrinal, but the real reasons were "strongly personal" and reflected his lack of candor and good will.
4. The complaint that the Scandinavians were being indoctrinated with American Lutheran ideas was devoid of truth; on the contrary, the rights and privileges of the Scandinavian students at the University were "as sacredly maintained as any others."
5. The Americans are said to have imposed their opinions upon the Scandinavians in the Synod and the University. The exact opposite has actually occurred, since it was the Scandinavians who insisted upon constitutional changes in the Synod of Northern Illinois, the University, and the college church in Springfield which would compel everyone to conform to their ideas, while the Americans asked only for the privilege of maintaining their own

³³ Esbjörn's statement is given in full in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 185-188.

freedom of interpretation in theology and doctrine.

6. The Americans have been accused of being intolerant and presumptuous toward the Scandinavians. On the contrary, it has been the Scandinavians who have been the most intolerant and critical of the Americans, accusing them of heresy and false doctrine.

7. All gifts, monetary and otherwise, received by the University, whether intended for general use or for the specific support of the Scandinavians, have received the same careful attention and handling. To accuse the school authorities of dishonesty is to indulge in wild and irresponsible, indeed unchristian, slander.

8. The Americans have been charged with subversion. But it was now clear that while maintaining an outward semblance of unity, Pastor Esbjörn and some of his friends had surreptitiously schemed and planned to undermine the unity of the Lutheran Church in Illinois, and now asked for understanding and approval of their violent and factious actions.³⁴

The Defection of the Scandinavians

After the Conference delegation had listened to the disputants and received their reports, a special committee of seven was named to weigh the evidence and recommend appropriate action. The committee declared that "it cannot regard and treat Prof. Esbjörn's resignation as a detached event, but as connected with, and the consequence of, the weaknesses, which for some time have been found in our Synod." On the basis of its investigation the committee submitted the following resolutions which were unanimously adopted:

Since we are fully convinced that there is found in our Synod a decided difference of opinion in [regard to] doctrine; and since there is in reality a rupture instead of a union in the Synod and since contentions and quarrels serve to diminish confidence, weaken our strength and prevent our progress; and since we are exposed to the danger that at any time through a sufficient majority of votes against us, a change in our doctrinal position may be forced upon [the Synod]; and since it is our most holy duty to protect and defend our confession of faith unpolluted both in our congregations and in the teaching of theology which our students receive, and in the influence which is exerted by those who shall become the preachers and pastors in our congregations; and since our experience clearly shows us that in these respects we have no security in the connection in which we have hitherto stood, therefore,

³⁴ The statements of Harkey and Reynolds are preserved in the *Esbjörn Collection*, Augustana Archives, Rock Island. The articles in the Lutheran press, pro and con, bearing upon the controversy are collected and published in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. IX, pp. 106-189.

Resolved:

1. That we approve of Prof. Esbjörn's resignation as our Scandinavian professor at Illinois State University, and that we give him our sincere thanks for the zeal wherewith he has worked for, and the faithfulness wherewith he has watched over, the welfare of our congregations in his capacity as professor, and for the fatherly care and kindness which he has shown our students; and that we approve of the manner in which he has distributed the money which he received for their support.
2. That we Scandinavian pastors and congregations, who have hitherto been united with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Northern Illinois, herewith peacefully withdraw from our churchly union with said Synod, and that the officers of our Conference respectfully inform the president of said Synod of this our withdrawal.
3. That we hereby decide to meet on Tuesday the 5th of next June in the Norwegian Ev. Lutheran Church in Clinton, Rock County, Wisconsin, in order to organize a synod, and that a committee of three be appointed to work out a constitution, which is to be presented at the said meeting for adoption.

On the basis of another committee report regarding the financial standing of the Scandinavian professorship, the following resolution was adopted:

That a committee of four be appointed to prepare a plan regarding our professorship and the establishment of our own school and to report the said plan at the meeting already set for Clinton, Rock County, Wisconsin. The committee consists of Prof. Esbjörn, Erland Carlsson, K. Langeland, and Ivar Lawson.³⁵

These actions taken at the Chicago convention by the United Scandinavian Conference were highly significant on several counts. In the first place, such action constituted the denouement of those tensions which had exerted centrifugal force within the Synod of Northern Illinois from the very beginning. While it was the theological and doctrinal differences which received most attention and were ostensibly the reef upon which unity was being shipwrecked, the underlying tensions of nativism, nationalism, and cultural difference must be accounted as important contributory factors which supported, aggravated, and accentuated the theological and doctrinal issues.

In the second place, the resolution by the Scandinavians to withdraw from the Synod of Northern Illinois was the signal for further defections from the General Synod. Before the decade would come

³⁵ Minutes kept at the meeting of the United Chicago, Mississippi and Minnesota Conferences in the Swedish Lutheran Church in Chicago, April 23-27, 1860, *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 179-188.

to a close, subsequent ruptures with the General Synod, for doctrinal and political reasons, would reduce that parent body to a mere shadow of its former size and strength.

In the third place, the Scandinavians by their withdrawal placed themselves in an exposed position in both the Midwest as well as throughout the Lutheran Church in America. Their erstwhile allies in Illinois were now to become their critics and competitors, and much of the good will and sympathy which had once been extended to them by the Americanized Lutherans in the East had been alienated, and very little help or encouragement could be henceforth expected from those who had been branded by the Scandinavians as "pseudo-Lutherans."

In the fourth place, the Scandinavians gave to their critics gratuitous grist for their mills. Those who had belabored the Scandinavians on account of their "unionism," charging them with either blindness or theological obscurantism, were now apparently proven to have been right. Not only Walther in Missouri and the high-church Norwegians in Wisconsin, but even the earlier opponents, Unonius the Episcopalian and Hedstrom the Methodist, could now exclaim, "I told you so, but it has taken you ten years to realize we were right in the first place."

And finally, it was by this action that the Scandinavians differentiated their own position in America, creating thereby the inescapable necessity of establishing their own independent institutions which would enable them to express their own spiritual tradition and religious genius without being encumbered by inhibiting associations. In so doing, however, they now faced the danger of insulating themselves from those connections which would be most helpful and effective in fostering a growing sense of community in relation to their American environment.

A Church Is Founded

THE YEAR was 1860. James Buchanan was in the White House in Washington, presiding over a nation tottering on the brink of civil war. The Federal Union which had functioned under the constitution since 1789, was hanging in precarious balance as a hopelessly divided Congress was locked in futile debate, led by Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, and Stephen A. Douglas, the "little giant" from Illinois. Never had national discord been greater, or sectional bitterness more pronounced.

On the surface the issue at stake was slavery, but the real and basic causes for national discord were buried beneath the surface. There was the question of states' rights versus Federal authority and popular sovereignty. Where did the one end and the other begin? There was the problem of a staple-crop agrarianism in competition with a rapidly expanding industrial capitalism. There was the sectional rivalry between a decaying southern aristocracy and a burgeoning northern industrialism. There was the clash between the exponents of compromise and the advocates of force. Finally, there were the yet unresolved economic dislocations brought on by the financial panic of 1857 and the subsequent bitter quarrels over higher protective tariffs.

During the presidential campaign of 1860, the once powerful Democratic Party was split by sectional jealousy and internal discord, while the newly formed Republican Party carried their candidate, Abraham Lincoln, to victory at the polls that fall. Four days after Lincoln's election, South Carolina seceded from the Union, and by February 1, 1861, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas had followed South Carolina out of the Union; eight days later the Confederate States of America was formed at Montgomery, Alabama, with Jefferson Davis as president and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia as vice-president. On April 12, 1861, a southern brigade under General Pierre Beauregard attacked Fort Sumter, and Civil War had begun.¹

It was in such a period of national chaos and catastrophe that the Augustana Church had its beginning. It would be difficult indeed to envisage a more difficult and inopportune time for the launching of a

¹ Abell, Fleming, Levack, McAvoy, Mannion, *A History of the United States*, New York, 1952, pp. 258-311.

new church. To establish a far-flung enterprise which demanded great sacrifice and the closest possible co-operation would be a formidable undertaking under the most favorable circumstances. But to do this in a period of the greatest national emergency this country had ever faced called for exceptional faith and courage.

It must not be assumed that the immigrants in the Midwest were so isolated and insulated that they were untouched and untroubled by the events which were transpiring in the nation. Through both the written and spoken word the leaders of the Lutherans in the Mississippi Valley were kept informed about current events. The columns of *Hemlandet*, for example, were filled with discussions concerning the political and economic issues of the day.² And when President Lincoln called for young men to volunteer for military service the Scandinavians were not slow in responding. Many an immigrant home was destined to mourn the loss of a loved one who had given his life for the Union cause on the battlefields of the Civil War. Two of Esbjörn's sons, Joseph and Paul, answered the call to colors, and Paul lost his life on the battlefield near Lexington, Missouri.³ In the light of existing evidence, it is clear that the founders of the Augustana Church were not unaware of the immense difficulties which confronted them as they launched a new church in the nation's time of trouble. The concerns which moved and motivated them, however, were more compelling than their doubts and fears. And this raises the question: What were the basic concerns which motivated the Scandinavians in taking such a bold step.

Primary Motivations

In the first place, *they were concerned about preserving and transmitting their own unique religious and spiritual heritage.* Ten years on the American frontier had proven how difficult such a task could be in a free-church society, and how easy it was to become the prey of proselyters or the victim of innovators. Again and again the spiritual leaders of these Scandinavian-Americans had been driven to an agonizing reappraisal of their basic theological premises; to a restudy of the confessional symbols of historic Lutheranism; to a reassessment of the religious resources which had been bequeathed by the church of the homeland, and which in an earlier day, they had so readily criticised and taken for granted. In such a struggle and reassessment their

² See Ander, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-160.

³ Esbjörn's letter to Norelius, January 7, 1862, *Tidskrift för teologi*, 1899, Vol. I, p. 325.

eyes had been opened, not all at once, to be sure, but little by little, until they had finally come to a new appreciation and a fuller understanding of their own religious treasure. After a decade of association with Americanized Lutheranism within the Synod of Northern Illinois, they had become convinced that outward unity without inner harmony and concord was an empty form which could be expected to exert only corrosive and eroding effects upon the principles to which they were committed.⁴

The establishment of a new church was, therefore, *a decisive act of differentiation*, by means of which the Scandinavians sought to assert and distinguish those theological elements in their tradition which had become characteristic of the group mind. It was an action through which they meant to guard themselves against fragmentation, absorption, and eventual extinction. It was the means by which it would become possible to preserve in order to transmit that which they held to be their own distinctive religious legacy—a Swedish confessional Lutheranism informed and permeated by the quickening spirit of Scandinavian pietism.

The establishment of a new church body, however, was more than an act of differentiation. It was also, and at the same time, *an act of accommodation*. Coming from lands where the Lutheran Church was established by law and the religious order regulated by ancient custom and tradition, it took time for the Scandinavian immigrants to learn how to conduct an effective church program in a pluralistic and free-church society. How were congregations to be organized and maintained? How were religious institutions to be operated? How was an American ministry to be recruited and trained? How were amicable relations with other church bodies to be established? These were just a few of the important questions which confronted the Scandinavians as they began their first work in the Middle West.

In ten years, however, they had learned their lessons well. They had become acquainted with the manner of conducting church work on the American scene, and the type of church polity most suited to a democratic environment, and they modeled their institutional structures according to the patterns they had observed. Indeed, the association of the Scandinavians with their American brethren in the Synod of Northern Illinois had a profound influence upon them in terms

⁴ Cf. Resolutions at meeting of United Scandinavian Conference, Chicago, April 23-27, 1860. *Minutes of Conference*, translated in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 179ff.

of enabling them to accommodate themselves to an environment so strangely different from that of their homeland.

Eric Norelius, who was personally involved in these developments, and who can scarcely be accused of harboring an intense pro-American bias, readily acknowledged the indebtedness of the Scandinavians to their American associates. In the concluding section of the first volume of his *De svenska luterska församlingarnas och svenskarnas historia i Amerika* he declares:

As we cast a backward look over the connection of our pastors and congregations with the Synod of Northern Illinois it may seem at first glance to have been a mistake, and that it would have been more advantageous to us if our pastors from the beginning had established a Swedish synod. But they were not mature enough for this step, and thus we may believe that it was God who, in the developing situation, guided our affairs toward a higher purpose. It now appears that our union with the Synod of Northern Illinois was in certain respects necessary in order to afford us the experiences we needed for the establishment and development of our Church in this country. It was through this association that we learned a great deal about the organization and management of a free church; moreover, we came to understand the significance of the process of Anglicization and Americanization which confronted us. Furthermore, through this association we were guided into the mainstream of the general church life of Lutheranism in America, and were thus spared from the likelihood of an unfortunate isolationism. But above all, we were driven to a deeper appreciation than ever before of our evangelical Lutheran confession, since within the Synod of Northern Illinois we saw and experienced the regrettable results of laxity in doctrine and practice, and the impossibility of united co-operation within such an association. Our eyes were opened to the dangers confronting us; we awakened, as it were, from a bad dream, and this, praise God, before our congregations had become corrupted and gotten a taste for unsavory food. To be sure, the dissolution of our connection with the Synod of Northern Illinois occurred in an abrupt and revolutionary manner, but it seems to me that even here we can perceive God's guiding hand. If we had tried some other way, some of our pastors and congregations would have perhaps remained in the Synod of Northern Illinois. As matters now stand, we can count ourselves most fortunate that we withdrew as one man, and that our little flock was not rent asunder.⁵

Briefly then, it may be said that in founding their new church the Scandinavians at once differentiated their religious legacy, and in structuring their new institutions accommodated themselves to the cir-

⁵ Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 814f.

cumstances of a free-church society in order to transmit effectively that heritage to their constituents in an American environment.

There was a second basic motivation which impelled the Scandinavians to form their own independent church, namely, *the preservation and strengthening of the bonds of unity among themselves*. As we have noted in previous references, the Scandinavians in the Synod of Northern Illinois were composed of both Norwegians and Swedes, and between them there existed a very real sense of mutuality and comradeship. Something was nevertheless lacking. Since the Swedes were in the majority it was natural that the dominant leadership in the United Scandinavian Conference would come from them, and that major emphasis and attention would be given to problems and questions connected with the majority group. When a Scandinavian professor was to be chosen for Illinois University, for example, it was a Swede, L. P. Esbjörn, who received the appointment, and in the Scandinavian language courses at the school, it was Swedish rather than Norwegian which received greatest emphasis simply because the Swedish students outnumbered their Norwegian brethren and the professor was himself Swedish. Though the Norwegians were promised a teacher of their own, a Norwegian professor was not added to the faculty until several years later.⁶ As a consequence the Norwegians had shown a disturbing lack of interest and enthusiasm regarding the professorship at Springfield, and seemed reluctant to give it their hearty support. As the solicitor for the professorship endowment, Esbjörn had scant success among the Norwegians.⁷ How deep this Norwegian indifference was no one could know, and there is no evidence that Esbjörn and his colleagues feared a break in their relations with their Norwegian colleagues.⁸ But they did realize that the bonds of union must be strengthened. By the establishment of their own church, they could co-operate more closely together and mutually serve one another more effectively. Indeed, in this connection, it must be observed that it was doubtless no accident that the constituting convention of the Augustana Church was held, not in some Swedish church, but in the Norwegian Lutheran church at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin.

There was also a danger of disunity among the Swedes them-

⁶ August Weenaas to Paxton, Illinois, 1868.

⁷ Letter to Erland Carlsson, August 8, 1856, in *Tidskrift för teologi*, 1899, Vol. I, p. 289.

⁸ There seems to have been greater danger of schism among the Norwegians themselves since there was some disagreement in the Norwegian section of the Synod regarding various church usages. Thus, a strengthening of unity among the Norwegians themselves, as well as between the Norwegians and Swedes, was highly desirable.

selves. Differences in personality, viewpoint, and temperament made it difficult for Esbjörn and Hasselquist to co-operate together, and neither man enjoyed the full confidence of the other. While Eric Norelius gravitated toward Esbjörn, Erland Carlsson usually found himself on the side of Hasselquist. Esbjörn's break with Springfield and his unqualified criticism of the Synod of Northern Illinois was applauded by Norelius, but was deplored by Hasselquist and Carlsson. Neither of the latter entertained the bitter suspicions which Esbjörn expressed regarding the dangers of "New Lutheranism." Although Hasselquist was no "unionist" in the sense of being willing to compromise or sacrifice his basic principles as a Lutheran, he had a spirit of broad toleration far greater than Esbjörn, and openly expressed his admiration for certain American Lutherans and counted many of them among his best friends.⁹ After the Synod of Northern Illinois amended its constitution in 1854, affirming the Augsburg Confession as a "correct" exposition of Scriptural truth, both Hasselquist and Carlsson were happy in this relationship and would have preferred to remain in the association.¹⁰ As for Erland Carlsson, there is little doubt about his attitude toward the American brand of Lutheranism. In a letter to Norelius, dated December 18, 1855, he declared,

None have yet dared to question the authority of the Sacred Book. . . . The question is not if these doctrines have a foundation in the Bible or not; but if we should retain the old confession with its old teachings, or accept the new which conforms with the truth.¹¹

While the broadmindedness of Hasselquist and Carlsson caused Esbjörn no little concern and anxiety, the stubborn independence and increasing provincialism of his best friend, Eric Norelius, was no less a matter of some apprehension. Norelius had never been sympathetic toward the Synod of Northern Illinois and was outspoken in his disapproval of it.¹² Moreover, after launching his missionary career in Minnesota in 1856, he became increasingly convinced that the expanding needs of the Swedes in that territory demanded the establishment of a program of activity which would be centered where the needs existed and adapted to the particular conditions which prevailed there. He was persuaded that the needs in Minnesota could neither be understood nor adequately met by a religious association centered in far-

⁹ *Hemlandet*, May 4, 1855; June 1, 1859.

¹⁰ Letter to Harkey, April 9, 1860, *Hasselquist Collection*, Augustana Archives.

¹¹ Quoted by Ander, *op. cit.*, p. 43f.

¹² See his critical comments in his *Historia*, Vol. I, pp. 788ff.

distant Illinois. Commenting upon this situation a half century later, Norelius declared,

At this time the spiritual needs of the Swedish people in this country were nowhere as great as they were in Minnesota; the few pastors were absolutely overwhelmed by the work, and it cannot be denied that there was reason for feeling that both the Synod [Northern Illinois] and the conference [Mississippi] dealt with us as if we were stepchildren. To be sure, this may have been unintentional; the fact remains, however, that because of the remoteness of the area the pioneer Minnesota settlements were regarded as creatures of the Synod who must take things as they came.¹³

Accordingly, Norelius launched a program of activity which he hoped would eventually become self-sustaining. In 1857, he began the publication of a Swedish newspaper, *Minnesota Posten*, as a rival to Hasselquist's *Hemlandet*. This challenge to Hasselquist's journalistic leadership lasted only long enough, however, to force Hasselquist to merge his journal with that of Norelius with editorial offices in Chicago.¹⁴

Meanwhile, "Father" C. F. Heyer and W. A. Passavant had proposed the organization of an independent Minnesota Synod. They invited Norelius to join the conservative Americans and Germans in such a venture, and Norelius was strongly tempted to co-operate. When these quiet negotiations among the Minnesota leaders became known in Illinois, however, it caused dismay and alarm. Norelius was adjured by his Swedish brethren to the south to give up all such schemes and continue his connection with them in the Synod of Northern Illinois.¹⁵ In order to soothe the restive Minnesotans, the Synod of Northern Illinois at its convention in 1858 compromised with them by granting permission for the formation of a *Minnesota Conference* affiliated with the Synod. Thus the threatened schism was avoided.¹⁶ In their fervent appeals to Norelius, the Swedes in Illinois emphasized the imperative need of Scandinavian solidarity; disunity within their own ranks would be disastrous for the future. And according to Norelius' own admission, this was the argument which finally won the day.¹⁷

It was this same argument which buttressed, as nothing else did, the proposal to establish an independent Scandinavian Lutheran Church in which pastors and people with a common cultural and re-

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 848.

¹⁴ *The Missionary*, December 23, 1858; March 17, 1859.

¹⁵ Excerpts from letters in Norelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 840ff.

¹⁶ *Minutes of the Eighth Annual Convention of the Synod of Northern Illinois*, Mendota, LaSalle County, Ill., September 15-20, 1858.

¹⁷ See his comments, *op. cit.*, p. 848.

ligious background could find a new unity of strength and purpose in service to God and their scattered countrymen in the new world. In such a church sectional antagonisms could be overcome, and common resources brought to bear upon the needs of people wherever they might reside. Such a church would at once embody and deepen that spiritual kinship which had originally created the bonds of fellowship among the Scandinavians in the Mississippi Valley.¹⁸

There was, however, a third and vitally important concern which motivated the establishment of an independent Scandinavian Synod, and that was *the need for a more effective program of home missions*.

Beginning about 1850, Scandinavian immigrants poured into the country by the thousands each year. New settlements were constantly springing up in all parts of the country, particularly in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, New York, and Pennsylvania. When these scattered settlers heard of the religious work being done in Illinois, they sent urgent appeals for pastoral help. The minutes of every meeting of the Mississippi and Chicago Conferences record such appeals and reflect the growing concern which these increasing demands awakened among the Scandinavian leaders in the Synod of Northern Illinois. The very first minutes of the joint meeting of the two Scandinavian Conferences, in 1854, indicate the great spiritual dearth among the people. It was acknowledged that in all too many cases the new settlers were without any kind of spiritual care, and that immigration was bringing "hundreds, if not thousands, of people" to this country who were now compelled to get along "without pastor or churches."¹⁹

Year after year the story was the same: "The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few." The Scandinavians sought to meet the need by seeking to recruit pastors and evangelists from Sweden and Norway, but without much success. In desperation they licensed a number of spiritually minded laymen and students, but were still far short of meeting the demand. No over-all plan or strategy was devised for carrying on home missions, but each pastor was expected to prosecute the work in his own territory as he was able. Some parishes included as many as a half dozen settlements and stretched over many miles of difficult terrain. Numerous settlements had to be content with two or

¹⁸ The United Scandinavian Conference established January 4-9, 1854, had been formed "because the Chicago and Mississippi Conferences have so much in common." *Minutes of Chicago-Mississippi Conference, Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, p. 90.

¹⁹ Minutes in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 90ff.

three pastoral visits a year, while others in more remote areas were entirely unattended. Indeed, before the organization of the Augustana Church, half of the Swedish settlements in Minnesota were without pastoral leadership of any kind. When these melancholy conditions were brought to the attention of the Synod of Northern Illinois from time to time, the matter was usually disposed of by passing a few resolutions, with no further action taken. But it was evident that if these circumstances would be allowed to continue indefinitely, large masses of Lutheran immigrants would ultimately be lost to the church.²⁰

The crying need of the hour was a Scandinavian federation with both the authority and the will to move in upon this pressing problem and give it the attention it deserved. The obvious answer was a new and independent Scandinavian church, sensitive to the needs of its own people, aware of the peculiar wants of immigrant settlers, and ready and able to fashion a program of effective action. This was a task and responsibility with enough challenge to transcend and dispel the differences which tended to divide the Scandinavians and to unite them in a heroic undertaking in spite of the troubled times and their own doubts and fears.

The Constituting Convention at Jefferson Prairie

Impelled by these basic concerns, the pastors and delegates representing the Scandinavian congregations formerly associated with the Synod of Northern Illinois, gathered in the Norwegian Lutheran church at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, June 5-11, 1860, to implement the decisions which had been made at the convention of the United Scandinavian Conference in April. The small rural community of Jefferson Prairie lay about five miles from the Clinton railroad station, and the church in which the sessions were held was a plain, frame building seating about three hundred people. The Rev. Ole Andrewson, a colaborer among the Norwegians with Paul Andersen of Chicago, was the pastor. The official delegation included twenty-six pastors, of whom seventeen were Swedish and nine Norwegian, and fifteen laymen, of whom nine were Swedish and six were Norwegian. They represented forty-nine congregations of which thirty-six were Swedish and thirteen Norwegian, with a combined membership of 4,967.²¹

The first session began at 3:00 o'clock on the afternoon of June 5,

²⁰ Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 39.

²¹ *Protokoll hållet vid skandinaviska ev. lutherska Augustana synodens första möte i Clinton, Rock County, Wisconsin, d. 5-11 Juni, 1860.* Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 8-21.

with a service of worship conducted by Pastor T. N. Hasselquist. His sermon was entitled, "Our Task, Our Peril and Our Victory," using Revelation 2:1-7 as his text. After the service Pastor Hasselquist, chairman of the United Scandinavian Conference, convened the first business session. Following the roll call, a motion was made to organize a Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Synod, which was unanimously adopted. Election of officers followed, and Pastor Hasselquist was chosen as the first president of the new synod, with Pastor O. J. Hatlestad as the secretary and Mr. A. A. Klove as treasurer. At this point the first business session adjourned and Pastor Paul Andersen concluded the historic meeting with prayer.

The next morning, June 6, the convention reconvened at 9:00 o'clock to receive a report from a special committee which had drafted a proposed constitution. The original committee consisted of Professor Esbjörn, Pastor Paul Andersen, and a Mr. Andrew N. Testal. The committee report to the convention bore only the names of Esbjörn and Andersen, and Mr. Testal does not appear to have had much to do with the report or to have been in attendance at Jefferson Prairie. Indeed, a comment which appears in the minutes of the synodical convention for 1870, indicates that most of the work on the proposed constitution of 1860 had been done by Esbjörn.²² An account of the convention which appeared in *Hemlandet*, June 20, 1860, states that the committee report was presented in English "for the sake of the future," thereby suggesting that the organization of the new synod was not merely an attempt to create an isolated, nationalistic block within the Lutheran Church in America, but was rather an endeavor by the Scandinavians to fashion an institutional framework within which they could best express their own genius and serve their own people.²³

The proposed constitution was considered article by article, with the discussion continuing all day on Wednesday, June 6, and the following forenoon, with final adoption during the afternoon session on Thursday, June 7.²⁴ The length of time given to this discussion reflects the importance which the convention attached to the matter. The constitution must lay a strong and firm foundation for the new church; it must clearly delineate and set forth the theological premises upon

²² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, pp. 28-29.

²³ The original document, entitled "Constitution of the Scandinavian Ev. Lutheran Augustana Synod in North America" and signed, "Respectfully submitted, L. P. Esbjörn, Paul Andersen," is preserved in Augustana Archives, Rock Island. The Swedish version of the constitution appended to the Synodical Minutes of 1860 is undoubtedly a translation of the English original.

²⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, *op. cit.*

which the new synod was to take its stand, and its organizational provisions must furnish a structure which would enable the church to accommodate itself to an American environment.

An examination of the constitution reveals that the framers of this instrument borrowed from two sources. The over-all plan of organization and polity had been taken from the constitution of the Synod of Northern Illinois. The Scandinavians had learned from their American associates the type of religious framework which was best suited to American conditions, and they wisely followed their lead. Accordingly, the constitution provided for a representative form of government in which the ultimate authority rested with the congregations. Though the Synod was intended to be more than merely an advisory body, its legislative powers were tacitly limited to matters referred to it by congregations and conferences. The congregational prerogative of independent action in practically all matters except doctrinal subscription was acknowledged. The functions of the president were not to be the arbitrary power of a bishop, but those of a presiding officer, a supervisor and counselor. The Synod itself was defined as consisting of ordained ministers and regularly elected delegates from affiliated congregations, while membership in the Synod was to be granted only to those congregations which accepted the constitution and made annual contributions to the synodical budget. Although the constitution made provision for regional divisions in terms of conferences and districts, no specific lines of demarcation were drawn regarding the responsibilities, authority, and functions of such regional units *in relation to the Synod*, except to say that they were to be "accountable to it." In all of these respects the new constitution followed, almost word for word, the constitution of the Synod of Northern Illinois, giving to the new church a cohesive organizational structure but without rigid centralization.

In other respects there were marked differences. Article VI in the constitution of the Synod of Northern Illinois provided for the office of *Licentiate*, which granted laymen and students holding such licenses "the power to perform all ministerial functions during the time specified in this license." The new constitution made no provision for such an office and thereby abolished it. It did, however, provide for the licensing of catechists who were granted the right to serve congregations as preachers and teachers "under the care of specified ministers."²⁵

²⁵ Chapter 8. During the subsequent years of its history the Augustana Church made frequent use of the licensed lay preacher and teacher. These licensed

The most notable difference, however, between the constitution adopted by the Scandinavians and that of the Synod of Northern Illinois appeared in the doctrinal article. Here the source from which the committee borrowed was the congregational constitution which had been adopted by the United Scandinavian Conference in 1857. The doctrinal article in the congregational constitution was reproduced practically word for word, as follows:

Article II. As a Christian body in general, and particularly as Evangelical Lutheran, this synod acknowledges that the holy Scriptures, the revealed Word of God, are the only sufficient and infallible rule and standard of faith and practice, and also retains and confesses not only the three oldest symbols (the Apostolic, the Nicene and the Athanasian), but also the unaltered Augsburg Confession as a short and correct summary of the principal Christian doctrines, understood as developed and explained in the other Symbolical books of the Lutheran Church. This article shall never be altered.²⁶

It is at this point that the new church clearly differentiates itself most specifically in contrast to its former association, and takes its place among the forces of conservative, confessional Lutheranism in America. And as if to underscore this declaration, it adopted its unique name, *Augustana*, the Latin designation for the Augsburg Confession, for it was the theological premises enunciated in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to which the Synod was committed. It meant to make its position unequivocal; it was to be a *Lutheran* church in the generic and historical sense of that term, without *addition* or *subtraction*.

The constituting convention at Jefferson Prairie took two further significant actions; it established a theological seminary, and it created an agency for carrying on home missions.

In connection with the establishment of the seminary the convention adopted the following interesting resolution.

While our Scandinavian Professor, Rev. L. P. Esbjörn, has relinquished his services as such in Springfield, our professorship has not thereby been discontinued, but only moved to our new

laymen rendered an important service to the church, and a number of them, after serving a period of apprenticeship and satisfying minimum academic requirements, were ordained into the Augustana ministry. *Infra.*, p. 222.

²⁶ A comparison of the constitutions of the Synod of Northern Illinois and the Augustana Synod is given in an article by Conrad Bergendoff, "The Sources of the Original Constitution of the Augustana Synod, 1860," in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. V, pp. 85-106. The congregational constitution adopted by the United Scandinavian Conference in 1857 is given in Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 826ff. For a survey of the constitutional changes made by the Augustana Church, see A. D. Mattson, *Polity of the Augustana Lutheran Church*, pp. 119ff.

school; we therefore name and designate herewith said L. P. Esbjörn as Scandinavian and theological professor at Augustana Seminary in Chicago.²⁷

This resolution makes it clear that the Scandinavians in no way considered Esbjörn's resignation to have abrogated or annulled the office of Scandinavian professor, or affected their relationship to the office itself. Esbjörn's action had merely disassociated the professorship from the school at Springfield, and the new Synod was simply reaffirming the office and adopting as its own the obligations which the Scandinavians had assumed when the professorship was first established in 1857. The seminary which was formed at Jefferson Prairie was not, therefore, in fact a new institution, but was rather a continuation of the educational venture which had begun actual operations in the fall of 1858. This interpretation of the professorship, implicit in the resolution, was important because it gave the Scandinavians the right to lay claim to the assets of the Springfield professorship. The collection of these assets from Illinois State University involved the Augustana Synod in protracted bickering with the Synod of Northern Illinois which reflected little credit to either side. The matter was not resolved until 1863, when the Synod finally agreed to accept an old mortgage on the Swedish Lutheran Church in Chicago as full settlement and relinquish all further claims to the endowment funds.²⁸

The seminary constitution adopted at Jefferson Prairie provided for an institution with two departments, the one preparatory, the other theological. The program of the preparatory department would be designed to train young men for teaching and for entrance into the seminary. The theological curriculum would meet the requirements for ordination, and would embrace two branches: a *theoretical*, including language courses in Hebrew and Greek, Old and New Testament exegesis, dogmatics, symbolics, and church history, and a *practical*, including pastoral theology, homiletics, polity, and related subjects.²⁹ The faculty was to consist of three or more professors, of which one was to be Swedish, one Norwegian and one English.³⁰ The school year should cover a period of thirty-eight weeks, divided into two semesters of sixteen and twenty-two weeks.³¹ The Board of Directors should be composed of four pastors and four laymen, elected by the Synod, who

²⁷ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, p. 4.

²⁸ Arden, *op. cit.*, p. 113f.

²⁹ *Seminary Constitution*, Art. III. The first seminary constitution is published in Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 28-30. See also Appendix, *Protokoll*, 1869.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Article IV.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Article VIII.

were to be directly responsible to the Church for the conduct and management of the institution, and required to report all board activities at each annual convention of Synod.³²

By establishing its own seminary the Augustana Synod sought to insure both the purity and the perpetuation of its spiritual heritage. Since the Synod reserved to itself the right of calling and dismissing the seminary faculty, it could thereby exercise complete control over the kind of men who would train its ministers. By so guarding the training of its ministerium, the Synod could also make sure that the religious tradition to which it was committed would be preserved for future generations. Thus, the formation of the seminary constituted a very real part of the *differentiating* and *accommodating* actions involved in the establishment of the new church in America.

It is important also to note that the educational ideal envisaged in the seminary project is much broader than was often encountered in America of that day. In spite of the weakness and poverty, and the insistent pressures for ministerial manpower, the fledgling synod was not interested in founding merely a so-called "missions school," where the training would be limited to a few months and to brief courses in biblical exegesis and homiletics. These Scandinavian immigrants placed a premium upon a properly educated ministry, and they set their educational standards high, even though it meant fewer ministers, and a longer and more expensive period of training. To be sure, the Synod was compelled to license and ordain men who had not fulfilled the requirements envisaged in the seminary curriculum, but these cases were exceptions to the rule, and the ideal was never discarded, but served always as a lodestar guiding the Church in its educational endeavors.

The major premise of this educational ideal was that religion and theology must sustain a dynamic relationship to other branches of human knowledge and experience. Thus, in the Scandinavian lands, a broad education in the arts, humanities, and science was considered a prerequisite for ministerial training, and theology itself was not an isolated discipline, but was set within the framework of a university curriculum which expressed and embodied a total culture.

In the case of Augustana Seminary, this university ideal found expression in the establishment of two departments, a *preparatory*, which laid the foundations for what ultimately became a full four-year college course of study, and a *theological*, specifically designed to meet

³² *Ibid.*, Article X.

the needs of the pastoral calling. This reflects the influence of the chief leaders of Augustana who themselves had enjoyed the advantages of a university education and desired to transplant as much of their total cultural heritage as possible.

It was this emphasis upon learning which motivated the Synod to send Pastor O. C. T. Andrén to Sweden in the fall of 1860 to beg for books and money for the new school. The result of Andrén's appeal was a magnificent gift of some five thousand volumes, most of them from the Royal Library of King Charles XV, and a nationwide collection of funds which totaled \$10,846.45. Such was the gift of the motherland to the church and the school of her emigrant children.³³

With respect to home missions, the new synod took steps to place this activity on a more systematic and orderly footing. Heretofore, home missions had been haphazardly carried on by individual pastors and congregations without a unified plan of action or strategic guidance from any agency. At Jefferson Prairie the program of home missions was seen as the most vital and compelling task confronting the Synod. It was therefore resolved that:

1. A committee of three be established to have general charge of the home mission work and report its activities to the annual convention of the Synod.
2. That this committee be authorized to employ a traveling missionary, particularly for Minnesota, as soon as circumstances permit.
3. That the synodical president appoint one of the brethren to deliver a sermon on home missions at the next convention of Synod.³⁴

This action established the first home mission agency of the Augustana Church, the members of which were Pastors T. N. Hasselquist and O. T. Hatlestad, and Mr. Ola Paulson. It was to be the duty of this central committee to gather information regarding needy settlements and vacant congregations, to organize a program of widespread action and collect funds for its prosecution, to recruit and send missionaries into those areas where need was most compelling. This is to say that the central committee was to formulate, supervise, and activate a program for home missions which would utilize the slender resources of the Synod to the best possible advantage. And at subsequent synodical conventions the subject of home missions was to be kept before the people by means of a special service devoted to this cause.

³³ Monograph by O. N. Olson, *Olof Christian Telemak Andrén*, Rock Island, 1954. See also Arden, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-122.

³⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

The central committee continued to function for ten years, and though not all its goals were realized, some solid achievements were registered. Eric Norelius was called as traveling missionary to Minnesota and began his work in the fall of 1860. As needs arose, other men were commissioned and sent to other sections of the land to minister to their countrymen. Appeals for funds brought response from congregations and individuals at home and abroad. The Swedish National Evangelical Foundation (Fosterlandsstiftelsen) sent timely gifts on several occasions during the decade. Thus, while the central home mission committee was compelled to report its failure each year to win more than a fraction of the immigrant masses, it did give to this vital work of the Church much-needed guidance, a new stability, and a sense of direction.³⁵

And so, in a time of national peril, in a day when prudence would have counseled postponement, and fear and doubt would have favored inaction, a church was founded as a testimony to a faith that was wiser than prudence and stronger than doubt and fear. They called it *Augustana*.

³⁵ *Jubel-Album*, op. cit., pp. 171-208. *The Augustana Synod, 1860-1910*, Rock Island, 1910, pp. 73-88.

The Shaping of a Tradition

THE FIRST decade or two constituted one of the most decisive periods in the history of the Augustana Church. During this period the foundations were laid upon which the Synod would henceforth build, and the basic direction given for future development. Having differentiated its broad and basic principles, the new church began to take shape as it sought to structure its life and work according to the environmental needs which it confronted. This shaping occurred in terms of the way Augustana responded to a number of compelling problems and needs.

The Civil War and the Indian Uprising

There was first of all the elemental problem of physical survival in a time of war and national upheaval. The Augustana Church was less than a year old when the first battles of the Civil War were fought, and as conflict increased in intensity and scope life became more difficult and precarious for both individuals and institutions. To be sure, the congregations of the Augustana Church were not located in those geographical sections of the country where the battles were actually fought, and the Scandinavians were, therefore, spared from the worst horrors of the carnage, but the war demanded a toll of heavy sacrifice from everyone. Like all wars in human history, the conflict between North and South had a demoralizing effect on the people, both materially and spiritually. All available resources of men and means were conscripted in the gigantic struggle. Money which would otherwise have been contributed to the work of the church was siphoned off by taxation for military purposes. Men in their best years who normally would have been active in their congregations, or studying to prepare for teaching or the ministry, were being drawn into the armed forces until classrooms were nearly empty and the male population depleted so that in some communities only small boys and old men remained.¹ Even more disturbing were the psychological and spiritual effects of

¹ Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 143. Student enrollment in the Seminary totaled sixteen during 1860-61; the following year it dwindled to twelve, and the last year in Chicago it numbered only nine. *Protokoll*, 1861, p. 23; 1862, p. 21; 1863, p. 23.

the war. Hearts and minds were everywhere filled with fear, anxiety, and sorrow, as reports of battle casualties, victory, and defeat trickled back to the home front. The war was the one absorbing topic of thought and conversation. As always, the sinews of war were strengthened by hate and bitterness, and as more and more homes were touched by hardship and bereavement, and Northern propaganda flooded the country with lurid tales of Southern atrocities and brutality, the Scandinavians shared with other Northerners the rising spirit of bitter antipathy toward the "southern traitors."² This kind of climate was not conducive to Christian progress or spiritual growth and development; people were too preoccupied with the grim business of crushing the enemy. The following excerpt from an official church report reflects the difficulties which beset the Christian cause in this troubled time.

The great Civil War which now engulfs this country has taken away so many of our men that our congregations are hard pressed to provide for their spiritual needs. The war has had, and will certainly continue to have, a detrimental effect upon the progress of Christianity. The hearts and minds of our people are constantly filled with anxiety and thoughts about the war, how it progresses and how it will end. The Lord no longer seems to be in this holocaust, but we hope and pray that He will finally appear in the stillness after the storm. The Lord chastens, but the people seem to become all the more hardened. He speaks through the sword and plague, but men will not listen. We trust, however, that He shall graciously send the rain which will soften the hardhearted.³

A further cause of suffering and distress was the Indian massacre of 1862 in Minnesota. For a number of years the Sioux tribes, concentrated in the Yellow Medicine reservation in the west-central section of the territory, had been nursing a growing resentment against the white settlers. By fraud and deceit the Indians had been tricked into agreements which robbed them of their ancestral hunting grounds without receiving fair and equitable recompense. Step by step the whites had crowded the red man out of his homelands, taking from him his fields, and even his livelihood, pushing him into an ever smaller territory, hedging him about with laws and rules the Indian did not want and could not understand. Growing more and more angry and sullen as they watched the encroachments of the white man, the Sioux

² The Scandinavians were for the most part staunch Republicans and supporters of Lincoln and his policies. The editorials and correspondence appearing in *Hemlandet* during the war years reflect this pro-north and anti-slavery sentiment in almost every issue.

³ Report by Rev. J. Person, secretary of the Minnesota Conference, 1862, quoted by Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 145.

tribes finally determined to drive their enemies from the territory west of the Mississippi.⁴

The Sioux hit the war path on August 17, 1862, striking settlements first in Meeker county, Minnesota, then spreading their assaults quickly they reached as far north as Kandiyohi county and southward into the upper areas of Nicollet county. Hundreds of people, men, women, and children, were killed, and some women and children were taken captive. Churches, homes, houses, and barns were burned, crops destroyed, and cattle dispersed or stolen. A number of border settlements were completely wiped out, while others were partially destroyed. Virtually the entire population in the stricken area was forced to flee on foot across country, seeking shelter and help wherever it could be found. Among the hapless victims were many who were members of devastated Augustana congregations at West Lake, Norway Lake, Eagle Lake, and elsewhere.⁵

So at the very outset the Synod was harassed by vanishing resources, spiritual lethargy, devastated congregations, fear, uncertainty, and bitterness. But at the same time these very circumstances offered a challenge for greater Christian witness through new opportunities for service. In times like these it was not enough merely to continue the regular work of established parishes and preaching stations. The Civil War opened new and broadened gates of opportunity for service to the churches of the North as the Federal Government encouraged pastors and religious agencies to conduct worship and preaching services in military camps, to visit military hospitals and prisons, and minister to the sick, the wounded, the dying, and the imprisoned.⁶ A number of Augustana pastors responded to this summons and brought the ministry of the church to such military installations as were located in their territories.⁷ And as these parish pastors shared their experiences with their people, they bade them pray for the men in service, and ask God to bless and prosper the cause of freedom for which so many were suffering and dying. Serious efforts were also made by many pastors

⁴ *The Beginnings and Progress of Minnesota Conference*, Edited by Committee, Minneapolis, 1929, pp. 155-168. See also Emeroy Johnson, *A Church is Planted*, Minneapolis, 1948, pp. 164-181.

⁵ Vivid accounts of the Indian uprising and the steps taken to alleviate the suffering appeared in *Hemlandet*, August 27, September 3, 1862. See also *Protokoll*, Minnesota konferensen, Oct. 8, 1862. *Tidskrift*, 1899, Vol. I, p. 171.

⁶ Olmstead, Clifton E., *History of Religion in the United States*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1960, Chapter 20, especially pages 390ff.

⁷ See letters in *Norelius Collection*, Augustana Archives, P. M. Gustafson, dated February 10, 1863; John Johnson, September 15, 1863; C. A. Heden-gren, September 15, 1864; N. O. Westergren, January 17, 1865; A. Erickson, February 10, 1865.

to keep in touch through correspondence with members serving in the Army, while the church paper, *Hemlandet*, was offered free to all Augustana members in military service. Through the spoken and printed word the people of the church were challenged to think seriously and relevantly about the religious and spiritual implications of the stirring events of the day.⁸

Furthermore, when news of the Indian uprisings in western Minnesota reached other sections of the country, even though no appeal for relief funds had been made, voluntary offerings began to pour into the hands of Eric Norelius from congregations in Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. The Minnesota Conference elected a special relief committee consisting of Norelius, Andrew Jackson, and Johan Johanson, to handle all relief funds and dispense aid to the refugees from the Indian Massacres. Within a few months the committee had received almost \$750, and had extended aid to approximately seventy families. At the same time plans were made and carried through to reorganize the scattered congregations in the Indian territories and rebuild the churches which had been destroyed.⁹

Thus, the terrible war with its devastation of physical, moral, and spiritual values, aggravated and intensified by the sufferings and hardships caused by the Indian uprising, served nevertheless to awaken among the Scandinavians a new and broader sense of community consciousness and responsibility, a new and deepened appreciation of the spiritual values involved in the political and social issues of the day, and to create a dynamic opportunity to put faith into action in terms of deeds of Christian love and charity.¹⁰ In just such stretching of nerves, mind, and muscle, in such vigorous activity, the fledgling synod increased its strength, vitalized its life and, moving into hitherto unreached areas, it even promoted its numerical growth, while it broadened its vision, deepened its understanding and reinforced its resolve to meet the uncertain future with firm faith and bold deeds.

The Program of Christian Education

Closely linked with the problem of survival and growth was the whole question of education. In the most practical way the future of

⁸ See, for example, the article in *Hemlandet*, February 15, 1865, which calls attention to the prevailing materialism and sensuality of the age as the underlying evil which has brought the judgment of God upon the whole nation.

⁹ *Hemlandet*, November 5, 1862. See also *Protokoll—Minnesota konferensen, 1862* in *Tidskrift*, Vol. I, 1899, p. 171.

¹⁰ Cf. Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 145f.

the Synod was bound up with its educational program, since the compelling need of an informed and loyal laity as well as an indigenous American ministry could be met only by maintaining an adequate educational program at synodical, conference, and parish levels.

At the synodical level it was the theological seminary which was principally at stake. After moving the seminary to Chicago it was soon obvious that greater financial support and more adequate facilities would have to be provided, if the school was to accomplish its intended purpose. Many plans and proposals were discussed and debated. Finally, the plan which seemed most feasible was put forth by T. N. Hasselquist and backed by Erland Carlsson. This plan envisaged the founding of a great Scandinavian colony through the acquisition and sale of land to new settlers, the profits from which would constitute an endowment fund for the seminary to be located at the very center of the new colony. The large tract of land necessary for this speculative venture was to be purchased with the school funds already collected in Sweden and America.

Several possible locations were considered,¹¹ but finally an offer by the Illinois Central Railroad to sell to the seminary board one thousand acres of choice land in the vicinity of Paxton, Illinois, for \$6.00 per acre, with an option on an additional five thousand acres at \$10.00 per acre, was accepted by the board and subsequently ratified by the Synod at its convention in Chicago, June, 1863.¹² Thus, it was settled. The seminary was to be moved from Chicago to Paxton before the opening of the next school year.¹³

The whole colonizing scheme, however, was bitterly opposed by Esbjörn, who felt that Chicago was the logical place for the school and that the colonization plan was a hazardous gamble for which the pledged resources of the school ought never to be used. In a letter to Norelius, dated May 27, 1862, he expressed his views in the following words.

I become troubled when I think about this matter and realize that everything we have done and all the money we have gathered is going to be bungled and will go up in the smoke of wretched land speculation. You brethren in Minnesota have burned your fingers on such deals. Arise, then, as one man and say "No," an eternal "No," to all speculation. Let those who so desire buy land and establish colonies, build churches and parsonages. The modest

¹¹ Grundy County, Iowa, Oconto, Wisconsin, near Green Bay, and Appleton, Iowa.

¹² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1863, p. 10f.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

gifts of well-meaning friends and the farthings of the poor folks in Sweden have not been contributed for such purposes, but for *a ministerial seminary in Chicago*. Mark that! We have no right to use these funds for any other purpose, and least of all for speculation. . . . I feel that this is a breach of trust. Forgive me, but I cannot restrain myself. I must sound the warning word of truth and ask that you give it echo among those brethren who are willing to listen.¹⁴

Esbjörn's protests went unheeded as the Synod chose to follow the leadership of Hasselquist and Erland Carlsson. As a consequence of this apparent repudiation of his policies and his growing disenchantment with a free-church society, augmented by ill-health and the bereavements suffered through the loss of several members of his family,¹⁵ Esbjörn began to grow homesick for Sweden and for the national Church which he once so bitterly criticized. He was offended when the Synod refused to hearken to his voice; he felt that he was being bypassed in favor of younger men, and that his leadership, therefore, was no longer essential. In a letter to Norelius, dated October 3, 1861, he expresses his sentiments as follows:

My homesickness increases, and if God shows me the way, I shall probably return again [to Sweden]. . . . It seems to me that God has used me, unworthy though I am, as a little pioneer out here, and that He now no longer needs me, but can accomplish His work here through others. The Lord is showing me now, as He has before, that it is time for me to leave. Perhaps the experiences I have gathered here may be of some use at home in the fatherland during the present critical conditions.¹⁶

Professor Esbjörn requested the seminary board to grant him a leave of absence from April to September, 1862, for the purpose of visiting Sweden to campaign for the seminary and to seek re-entry into the service of the Church of Sweden.¹⁷ During his visit in Sweden, 1862, Esbjörn traveled extensively, presenting the cause of the Augustana Church and Seminary to large crowds in almost every part of the country. Many congregations chose Esbjörn's visit as the opportune time to receive the offering sanctioned by the King on behalf of Augustana, and because of his gripping message about the needs in Amer-

¹⁴ Letter in *Tidskrift*, Vol. I, 1899, p. 329. See *Ibid.*, for other similar communications, pp. 321, 327 and 329.

¹⁵ Esbjörn had suffered the loss of two wives and five children since embarking upon his American ministry.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

¹⁷ *Minutes*, Board of Directors, Augustana Seminary, December 18, 1861.

ica, these collections were undoubtedly often substantially larger than they otherwise might have been.

Esbjörn's re-entry into the Church of Sweden was assured when his application for the post of chief pastor in the parish of Östervåla in Hälsingland was approved by the authorities with the stipulation that he begin his service on May 1, 1864. Upon his return to America Professor Esbjörn began to make preparations for his final leave-taking. At the conclusion of the school year in the spring of 1863, he resigned, and before the seminary moved its meager household to Paxton in the late summer of 1863, the professor and his family were already on their way back to Sweden, his fourteen-year ministry in America having come to an end. Thus, at the very time the struggling school and synod stood in greatest need of experienced leadership, L. P. Esbjörn, the pioneer, for reasons which to him seemed good and sufficient, followed the example of Pastor O. C. T. Andrén in relinquishing his American ministry for which he, as also in the case of Andrén, professed a deep love and concern, to resume a less arduous and more secure service in the Church of the homeland.¹⁸

Deprived thus of the services of its oldest and most experienced leader and only theological professor, the Synod was compelled to secure someone to take Esbjörn's place as head of the school. The hope was that a competent theologian could be found in Sweden who would be willing to come to America and lead the educational program.¹⁹ In the meantime the Synod turned to its president, T. N. Hasselquist, and asked him to step temporarily into the breach "until a Scandinavian professor can be secured."²⁰ When repeated efforts to engage a Swedish theologian failed, Hasselquist was continued in office year after year, without special board or synodical action. Indeed, it was not until 1875 that the Synod issued a formal call to Hasselquist as president of Augustana College and Seminary.²¹

As the universally esteemed president of the Synod from 1860 to 1870, and its chief theological mentor from 1863 until his death in 1891, Hasselquist exerted a marked influence upon practically every area of the Synod's life. It was he, beyond any other, who gave to the synodical structure a strong centralized authority, and discouraged sec-

¹⁸ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1863, pp. 22ff. Pastor Esbjörn had served the Östervåla parish as assistant pastor before coming to America. He continued to serve this congregation until his death in 1870. He lies buried in the Östervåla churchyard.

¹⁹ *Minutes*, Board of Directors, September 15, 1863.

²⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1863, p. 11.

²¹ See O. F. Ander, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

tional and conference particularism. In opposition to sectional leaders, whether from Minnesota or elsewhere, Hasselquist upheld the ideal of one synod, one school, one newspaper, one central government which could co-ordinate the expanding activities of the Church and foster a growing sense of unity among Scandinavian Americans.²²

No less pronounced was Hasselquist's influence upon the educational development of the Synod. Though he differed with Esbjörn on many questions, he fully shared Esbjörn's educational ideal which involved the recognition of the vital relationship between religion and culture. Religion and theology must not be isolated from the rest of human knowledge and experience, but must inform, and be informed by, it, and education must be the handmaiden of this cross-fertilization.²³ To this end the theological curriculum must be preceded by "preparatory courses" in science, the humanities, and the practical skills, in order that the clergy of the church may know not only the gospel, but might also become intelligently aware of the world to which the gospel is addressed.²⁴ Under Hasselquist's guidance the preparatory department was steadily strengthened by the addition of more courses and employment of competent instructors.²⁵ By 1869 the "preacher factory" known as Augustana Seminary had been so transformed that a revision of its original constitution had become necessary. The new constitution of 1869 clearly indicates what had happened. Article III provided for an expanded institution composed of three departments, (1) a pre-collegiate preparatory, (2) a four-year collegiate, and (3) a two-year theological. Article IV stipulated that matriculation in the theological was ordinarily to be predicated upon satisfactory completion of courses offered in the preparatory and collegiate departments or acceptable equivalents thereof.²⁶

At the same time as the revised constitution was being laid before the Synod for adoption, the Board of Directors of the school was applying to the Illinois State Legislature for a new charter. It is most significant that in both the revised constitution and the new charter a new name is given to the institution. *Augustana Seminary* now be-

²² Norelius, Hasselquist, *op. cit.*, pp. 63ff.

²³ See his dedicatory address at Augustana College, June 12, 1889, given in Norelius, *Hasselquist*, pp. 266-272.

²⁴ Augustana seminariets konstitution, Bilaga B, *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860.

²⁵ A record of class schedules, dating back to 1862 is preserved in the archives of Augustana College, Denkmann Library, Rock Island.

²⁶ Revised Constitution of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1869.

comes *Augustana College and Theological Seminary*. The meaning is clear. These Scandinavians were determined to provide for themselves and their children an educational program which was inspired by the university ideal of the homeland, patterned according to the lines of a typical American college, and adapted to the needs of the Church it was to serve.²⁷

Hasselquist exerted a telling influence not only *upon* the school, but *through* the school upon the entire Synod. As the chief theological professor of the Synod for twenty-eight years, he was privileged to instruct the pastors who were being graduated and ordained each year. These pastors bore the marks of their training and in turn impressed their congregations accordingly. One pastor who took his theological training under Hasselquist has characterized his former teacher thus:

He [Hasselquist] was not a catechist in the strict sense of the term, and his strength as a theological teacher did not rest upon his ability to impart to his students a systematic knowledge of dogmatics, but rather upon his ability to instill in them something of his own childlike and Scripture-centered faith. It will not be denied that there was orderliness in his instruction, but at the same time it cannot be maintained that his dogmatics or other lectures constituted a well-rounded presentation. His theological instruction was not a cunningly devised dogmatic work of literary art, but a natural outflow of his own living faith. His instruction was biblically conservative, but by no means lifeless; he did not hold blindly and stubbornly to certain dogmatic forms, but sought to preserve the true content of his confessional heritage. Without spending much time on dogmas or creeds he nevertheless understood how to implant into the minds of his students a genuine Lutheran orthodoxy.²⁸

The form which seemed to express more adequately both the character and content of Hasselquist's "childlike and Scripture-centered faith" was the systematic theology of the Norwegian theologian and evangelist Gisle Johnson (1822-1894), who was to Norway during the middle decades of the nineteenth century what Carl Olof Rosenius was to Sweden—a herald bringing the quickening spirit of conservative pietism to the national church.²⁹ It was Pastor August Weenaas, the

²⁷ The "educational philosophy," if it can be so called, which motivated Hasselquist and his colleagues is reflected in the utterances connected with the dedication festivities in Rock Island, 1875. See "Tillkännagivande," in *Augustana*, August, 1875, p. 383f.; "Invigningshögtiden," *Augustana*, September, 1875, pp. 438-451; "Skol- och invigningsfesten i Rock Island, 1875," *Ungdoms-Vännen*, October 15, 1883.

²⁸ Article by "A. R." in Norelius, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

²⁹ Nelson and Fevold, *The Lutheran Church Among Norwegian Americans*, Minneapolis, 1960, Vol. I, pp. 32-45.

first full-time professor at Augustana Seminary who joined the faculty at Paxton in 1868, who seems to have introduced Johnson's theological system to Augustana.³⁰ Hasselquist is said to have been so impressed with this system that he made a Swedish translation and used it in his theological instruction.³¹

The dogmatics of Gisle Johnson, in harmony with its basic pietism, was subjectively oriented, beginning with a discussion on the nature of Christian faith and then proceeding to explicate the content of such faith. As might be expected from a pietistic theology, it tended to be literalistic in its biblical interpretation and puritanical in its attitude toward "the world," emphasizing the need for self-denial and discipline, and the close connection between justification and sanctification. It was a theology which also endeavored at every point to be faithful to the historic confessions of the Lutheran Church. But above all, Johnson's theology was practical in its application. As in the case of Rosenius' viewpoint, the emphasis was consistently placed upon *praxis* rather than theory.³²

This type of theology suited the taste and temperament of the energetic Hasselquist for whom Christianity was a way of life rather than a philosophy of life.³³ Indeed, it may be asserted that the Johnsonian theology suited the taste and temper of the Augustana Synod generally, for it expressed in systematic terms the religious tradition represented by this body. This was theologically the main bill of fare upon which the Augustana ministerium was fed as long as Hasselquist stood at the helm of the seminary. And although his successors chose to approach the study of theology from different viewpoints than that of Gisle Johnson, it may be said that Hasselquist has succeeded in casting his shadow over the theological nurture of the Augustana Church throughout its entire history. This may be one of the reasons why the Augustana Church over the years has developed a number of skillful practical churchmen, but few outstanding theologians.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, footnote, p. 200.

³¹ August Weenaas, *Livserindringer Fra Norge og Amerika*, Bergen, 1935, p. 118. Weenaas claims that without waiting for Johnson's permission Hasselquist translated and published Johnson's Dogmatics and thus it appeared in Swedish before it came out in Norwegian. See also Forsander, *Lifsbilder*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

³² Weenas, *Livserindringer*, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-64; *Nordisk teologisk oppslagsbok*, pp. 188-189. Einar Malland, *Church Life in Norway, 1800-1850*, trans. Harris Kaasa, Minneapolis, 1957, pp. 35-36. See also Gisle Johnson, *Dogmehistorien og den Kristelige Etik*, Kristiania, 1897, pp. 187-220.

³³ See characterization of Hasselquist by "P. J. S." in Norelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 324ff.

Interest in education was not limited, however, to the synodical level; regional loyalties also found expression in educational ventures. During the first decade of its existence the Augustana Synod expanded in numbers and territorial scope in spite of the difficult war years. The confirmed membership of the Synod in 1860 was 5,507; by 1870 it totaled 19,355. The number of congregations for the same period increased from 60 to 137, concentrated largely in Illinois and Minnesota, but scattered also throughout the adjacent areas of Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Dakota, New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania.³⁴ To expedite the administration of synodical affairs in these scattered areas the Synod created, as need arose, regional jurisdictional units called conferences.³⁵ The original conference divisions, Mississippi and Chicago, were nationalistic, but subsequent conferences were geographical and regional in character, including the Minnesota Conference which was formed in 1858. In 1868 the Mississippi Conference petitioned the Synod for permission to divide itself into eastern and western sections with the Mississippi River as the dividing line. These two sections were to co-ordinate their work by holding a joint convention once each year. This petition was granted by the Synod.³⁶ At the synodical convention in 1870 the Augustana Synod undertook a serious revision of its organizational structure. New regional divisions were created and the boundaries defined by the Synod. Thus, the congregations in the Eastern states were to constitute the New York Conference. The congregations in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and southern Wisconsin were to comprise the Illinois Conference. The congregations located in Minnesota, Dakota, and north-west Wisconsin were to make up the Minnesota Conference. Those in Iowa were to constitute the Iowa Conference, and the Kansas Conference was to include the congregations in Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri.³⁷

³⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, 1870, Kyrklig Statistik. See also *Minutes of the Augustana Lutheran Church*, 1961, Augustana Church Statistics, Every Year since 1940, p. 770.

³⁵ G. Everett Arden, *History of the Illinois Conference*, Rock Island, 1953, pp. 18ff.

³⁶ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1868, p. 41.

³⁷ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 41. As the Augustana Synod expanded new conferences came into being as follows: The Nebraska Conference, organized in 1886; the Pacific Conference formed in 1888, and divided into the Washington and California Conferences, 1893; the Washington Conference was later renamed Columbia. The Superior Conference, 1910; the New England Conference, 1912; the Red River Valley Conference, 1912; the Canada Conference, 1913, and the Texas Conference, 1923. See A. D. Mattson, *Polity of the Augustana Lutheran Church*, pp. 355ff. *Jubel-Album*, op. cit., pp. 87-120.

It was wholly natural that each conference, conscious of its own regional needs, would develop a sense of loyalty and concern which would seek to satisfy regional needs for the benefit of its residents. This emergent regional self-consciousness expressed itself not only in a growth of sectional independence which served as a counterpoise to the centralizing tendencies within the Synod, but also in regional educational experiments. Eric Norelius, who uniquely embodied the independent regional spirit, gave voice to this educational urge in a report to the Minnesota Conference in 1873 when he declared:

Unless a school is built and maintained in every state where a considerable number of Swedish countrymen have settled the young people will seek their education in the public institutions, and the church will miss the opportunity of training them for the church and the kingdom of God. One college in our widely scattered Synod will not be enough for this purpose.³⁸

Norelius spoke for his countrymen in Minnesota who had been offended by the synodical decision to move the seminary to Paxton. It was difficult enough for Minnesota youth to travel to Chicago in order to attend the synodical school. To reach the village of Paxton, a hundred miles farther south, would be even more difficult. Furthermore, the Minnesota constituency had been stung by the pre-emptory way the synodical leaders had handled their suggestions for moving the school to Minnesota, or at least closer to the center of Scandinavian population in the Midwest.³⁹

Motivated, perhaps by both a sense of injured pride as well as mounting sectional need, the Minnesota Conference at its convention in East Union, 1862, resolved

That, since the need for teachers in our congregations is so pressing that we can no longer bear it, it is hereby decided that Brother Norelius be requested to assume the task of instructing such young men as the congregations might send him. Brother Norelius accepted this assignment.⁴⁰

In obedience to this resolution Norelius opened his home at Red Wing, Minnesota, as a classroom in the autumn of 1862, and thus quietly launched the *Minnesota Elementar Läroverk*, which was later moved to Carver, Minnesota as *Ansgar Academy*, and in 1875 relocated in St. Peter, Minnesota, as *Gustavus Adolphus College*. Whether or

³⁸ Quoted by Emeroy Johnson, *Eric Norelius, Pioneer Midwest Pastor and Churchman*, Rock Island, 1954, p. 127.

³⁹ See Arden, *School of the Prophets*, op. cit., pp. 141ff.

⁴⁰ Copy of Minutes in *Tidskrift för Teologi*, Vol. I, 1899, p. 171.

not the people of Minnesota intended their new school to be a rival to the synodical institution, some of the synodical leaders, and particularly Hasselquist, looked upon it as such, and endeavored to discourage the venture.⁴¹ But the people of Minnesota had no intention of abandoning their school; on the contrary, they persuaded the Synod to approve the *Läroverk* at the synodical convention in 1863, with the provision that it would become both "a training center for parish teachers and a preparatory school for those who intended to enter the seminary."⁴²

Although the launching of a school in Minnesota imposed upon the people of that conference such staggering financial burdens that they were unable for a number of years to contribute what they otherwise would and could have to the synodical school, and thus worked a hardship on that institution, and though the Minnesota school courted financial disaster and was able to offer only a very limited education for a number of years, it nevertheless proved that regional education was possible. Thus, the experiment in Minnesota gave rise to what has been called the "college mania" of the following decades.⁴³

When the people of Kansas witnessed what could be done in Minnesota, they set about making plans for the establishment of their own sectional school. As a consequence, *Bethany College* was founded in 1881, under the leadership of Pastor Carl A. Swensson in Lindsborg, Kansas. Swensson, a son of the pioneer Rev. Jonas Swensson, was a richly gifted individual who in his brief lifetime of scarcely more than forty-six years, distinguished himself as a great preacher, writer, and educator. Known for many years as "America's most representative Swede," he was the personal friend of Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, and took an active part in the political life of his own State. His influence as a religious leader extended far beyond his own synod, and he was honored by being elected first to the office of secretary and then to the presidency of the General Council. This dynamic leader infected those around him with his own sense of enthusiasm and broad vision, and inspired them to sacrifice for the welfare of the church and school in Kansas.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Conrad Peterson, *Remember Thy Past, a History of Gustavus Adolphus College, 1862-1952*, St. Peter, 1952, pp. 14ff. See also Emeroy Johnson, Eric Norelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 102ff.

⁴² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1863, p. 13.

⁴³ Stephenson, *Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration*, *op. cit.*, p. 330f.

⁴⁴ *Korsbaneret*, 1905, pp. 175-193. *Prärieblomman*, 1903, pp. 76-86. 1913, pp. 105-119. *Jubel-Album*, 1893, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-159. Emory K. Lindquist, *Smoky Valley People, A History of Lindsborg, Kansas*, Lindsborg, Kansas, 1953, pp. 86-107.

In 1883 the people of Nebraska launched their own Luther College at Wahoo, Nebraska, and used the school as a lever to pry themselves free from the Kansas Conference to form their own Nebraska Conference.⁴⁵ Ten years later, during the jubilee year of 1893, after the New York Conference had mustered enough strength and members to chart an independent course for itself, it, too, launched a school as Upsala College, opened its doors that autumn in the rented quarters of the Swedish Lutheran Bethlehem Church in Brooklyn. A gift of land brought the school to Kenilworth, New Jersey, in 1898, and in 1924 the institution found a permanent home in East Orange, New Jersey. The leading spirit in this venture was Dr. Lars Herman Beck, president of Upsala College from its inception until 1910. Under his able leadership the new school weathered its early financial difficulties, recruited a competent faculty and growing student body, and built its first school buildings.⁴⁶

Although the "school mania" came near wrecking the entire educational program of the Augustana Church by saddling the people with impossible financial obligations, it nevertheless served to spread educational opportunities to sections which the central synodical school was not able to reach and serve in the days before rapid transportation. Regional experimentation in education, even though it often proved a failure, served also to promote a general interest and concern for education throughout the Augustana Church through the competition which it engendered among the conferences. It is perhaps true, however, that if the rather limited resources of the Synod could have been more carefully and judiciously channeled into fewer but strategically located educational institutions, the best interests of the Church undoubtedly would have been more adequately served.

To maintain throughout the Church a loyal and informed laity

⁴⁵ The most adequate history of Luther College and the Nebraska Conference is J. I. Dowie, *Prairie Grass Dividing*, Rock Island, 1959. See especially pages 87-195. See also *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, p. 159; *My Church*, 1933, pp. 120-126.

⁴⁶ *Korsbaneret*, 1906, pp. 66-71; 1918, pp. 134-146. *Prärieblomman*, 1908, pp. 155-169. *The Augustana Synod, A Brief Review of Its History, 1860-1910*, Rock Island, 1910, pp. 122ff. The "college mania" brought a number of educational institutions into being which enjoyed only brief existence, such as *Hope Academy*, organized by the Red River Valley Conference in 1888; *Martin Luther College*, formed by a group of Chicago pastors in 1893; *Northwestern College*, established in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, 1900; *Minnesota College*, begun in Minneapolis, 1904; *Trinity College*, founded in Round Rock, Texas, 1906; *Coeur d'Alene College*, organized in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, 1907, and *North Star College*, established in 1908 at Warren, Minnesota. Cf. *Augustana Synod, 1860-1910*, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-135. See also Norelius, *Svenska luterska församlingarnas*, etc., Vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 256-261. *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-167.

which would be willing and ready to shoulder the sacrifices and undertake the responsibilities which the work of the new Synod required demanded also an educational program at the parish level. The Augustana Church met this need by the establishment of Sunday and parochial schools and a church press. As a matter of fact, the program of parish education antedates the organization of the Synod and goes back to the early days of the Mississippi Conference, as evidenced in the following resolution which the conference passed in 1853:

Resolved:

- 3) That our congregations be kindly urged to establish Sunday schools, singing classes according to Dean Dillner's system, and Bible classes, —the latter can more easily and advantageously be developed out of the Sunday schools.
- 4) That pastors zealously conduct catechetical instruction among the youth, especially confirmation instruction, using *Luther's Small Catechism* and such portions of the *Large Catechism* as may seem most practicable; Spener's *Catechism*, also, is recommended for reading, though not for memorization.⁴⁷

Although there are no records extant which would indicate how diligently the congregations sought to implement the conference resolutions, the statistical report attached to the first minutes of the Synod indicate a good deal of activity along this line. The report states that within the 49 congregations comprising the Synod in 1860 there were 29 Sunday schools and 18 parochial schools, and that 15 congregations maintained both Sunday and parochial schools.⁴⁸

In the first presidential report rendered to the Synod, Dr. Hasselquist declared:

A growing concern for the orderly and adequate instruction of the children has been manifested throughout our congregations. In the places which I have visited during the year I have had opportunity to conduct catechetical examinations, and I discovered that the knowledge which had been imparted to the children was very good, indeed, better than could have been expected under existing circumstances.⁴⁹

By 1870 the number of congregations comprising the Synod had increased to 142, which maintained 87 Sunday and 56 parochial schools,

⁴⁷ Minutes of the Mississippi Conference, Moline Illinois, January 6-9, 1853, translated in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, p. 89. For a discussion of the "Dillner System," referred to in resolution 3, see illustrated article concerning Dillner and the psalmodikon by Dr. O. N. Olson, *The Lutheran Companion*, November 10, 1943, pp. 1256ff.

⁴⁸ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, Kyrklig statistik.

⁴⁹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, p. 5.

indicating that the ratio between congregations and schools had continued fairly constant throughout the decade.⁵⁰

Concern for parish education came rather naturally to the Scandinavian immigrants, since public instruction in the homeland had been the joint responsibility of the Church and the State, and courses in religion, and particularly catechization, had been a part of the elementary training of every child. Here in America, however, because of the separation of church and state, public school instruction offered little or no religious training, and left this phase of education almost entirely in the hands of the churches.⁵¹ It was this situation which made the Sunday school such a timely and, therefore, popular religious institution among practically all American churches except the Roman Catholics. The Sunday school seemed to be ideally suited to a free-church society which looked to the churches for religious nurture.⁵² This circumstance undoubtedly prompted the Scandinavian congregations to adopt the Sunday school as a part of their parish program.

In those areas where the public school had not yet been established or where such school facilities were inadequate, or where community leaders, particularly the pastors, were opposed to the public school because it excluded religious instruction, there the parochial schools were established and flourished. There were some Augustana pastors who inveighed against the "godless public schools," and encouraged their congregations to maintain competitive parochial schools; however, in general the Scandinavian immigrants looked with favor upon the public school as one of the great advantages offered by America.⁵³

While the primary object of both Sunday and parochial schools was religious instruction, some of the earliest parochial schools, such as the one conducted by Eric Norelius in Chicago in 1854, were maintained for the purpose of instructing the immigrants in the essentials of American usage, especially the English language, and the student body, therefore, often included middle-aged adults as well as children.⁵⁴ But when it became apparent that especially the young would

⁵⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, Kyrklig statistik. The term "parochial school" generally means a school maintained by a parish during all or part of the summer for instruction in the Swedish language and religious subjects, especially Luther's *Catechism*.

⁵¹ cf. G. Everett Arden, "The American Conception of Church and State, The Historical Development" *Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. 27, January, 1948.

⁵² Olmstead, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-292.

⁵³ Stephenson, *Religious Aspects, etc.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 409ff.

⁵⁴ Norelius, "Hågkomster från året 1854," *Korsbaneret*, 1888, pp. 109-110. See also Johnson, *Norelius, op. cit.*, p. 31f.

soon enough learn the language of the land without the aid of the church, the parochial schools became the chief agencies for the preservation of the Swedish language among the youth, and thus the unique institution popularly known as "Swede school" came into being with its term of activity usually limited to a few weeks during the summer. The "Swede school," so familiar to practically every section of the Augustana Church from the pioneer period until after World War I, was usually taught by a student from one of the church colleges or the seminary. The curriculum included the study of Swedish language and literature, Bible history and Luther's *Catechism*. The main text books were the "A B C book" and *Luther's Small Catechism* with explanations. Classes were most often held in the basement of the church, or in the nave; teaching facilities were minimal and standards of achievement low.⁵⁵

The entire program of parish education, whether carried on in Sunday or parochial schools, was climaxed in the course of instruction preparatory to confirmation. It might indeed be somewhat difficult to establish any direct relevance of some of the activity carried on in both the Sunday and parochial schools to the objectives of the confirmation course.⁵⁶ The educational concept of confirmation, however, as practiced in the Augustana Synod, derived from the historic usage in the Scandinavian churches of Europe of making the course of instruction preparatory to confirmation the capstone of the years of religious nurture received in the home, the church, and the folk school.⁵⁷ Thus, in Augustana, as in Norway and Sweden, this important program of education was usually cared for by the pastor himself, with the conse-

⁵⁵ Cf. Emmet E. Eklund, "Faith and Education," *Centennial Essays*, Rock Island, 1960, pp. 76-80.

⁵⁶ The Lutheran Church has always professed that the chief objective of confirmation instruction is preparation for a committed and informed membership in the church. Too often in the period before World War I, the emphasis in Sunday and parochial school was chiefly upon orientation in Swedish language and culture. Many Americanized children confessed in later years that their early training in memorization of Bible passages, folk songs, and Luther's *Catechism* in the Swedish tongue left them without any real understanding of the great doctrinal truths held by the Lutheran Church—nor indeed, with any deep appreciation for the Swedish they were compelled to learn. "Svenkhetens bevarande," the perpetuation of Swedish culture, was in some cases permitted to intrude also into the confirmation instruction, in which cases the indoctrination was as much—or as little—Swedish as Christian. This situation constituted for many years part of the language problem in the Augustana Church. Cf. Stephenson, *Religious Aspects*, etc., chapter XXX, "The Problem of Language," *op. cit.*, pp. 458-476.

⁵⁷ A resolution emphasizing the importance and significance of confirmation was passed at a meeting of the Chicago-Mississippi Conference in Chicago, January 4-9, 1854. See *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, p. 93.

quence that both the quality of instruction and the standards of achievement were most often higher and more effective than the preceding programs had been. The pastor's training as a theologian and a pedagogue were largely responsible for this higher level of instruction. Moreover, the ordeal of a final public examination at the conclusion of the course was ordinarily enough of a goad so that long and tedious memorization was sufficiently mastered to win congregational approval and acceptance into full communicant membership.

In order to give the program of parish education more effective direction and leadership, the Synod in 1920 created the office of *Synodical Sunday School Secretary*, and authorized the Board of Home Missions to call a pastor to devote his full time to the important work. The Board extended a call to the pastor at DeKalb, Illinois, Dr. George A. Fahlund, who accepted and assumed office in 1921. The growing awareness of the importance of parish education on the part of the Augustana Church is reflected in the fact that in 1924 the Synod created the *Board of Christian Education and Literature*, which was charged with the task of supervising and encouraging the entire program of parish education throughout the Augustana Church. The Board of Christian Education and Literature was dissolved in 1943, and The Board of Parish Education created.⁵⁸ The presidents of the boards have been Dr. George A. Fahlund, Dr. Victor E. Beck, Dr. D. Verner Swanson, Dr. John Helmer Olson, Dr. Frank Bonander, and Pastor Marvin Raymond. Working under the direction of this Board, Dr. Fahlund continued in office until 1930, when he resigned to accept a call to the congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan. During his term of service, Dr. Fahlund headed the work of providing the Synod with a new "graded system" of Sunday school lessons.⁵⁹

Dr. Fahlund was succeeded by Dr. J. Vincent Nordgren, who, at the time of his call to the educational post, was pastor of the St. John's congregation in Rock Island, Illinois. Dr. Nordgren began his work in 1931. In 1934 the Synod changed the name of the office to *Director of Elementary Christian Education*. In the person of the new director, the Church found a man who brought to this educational task the personal endowments of pedagogical skill and creative imagination, as well as a wife whose abilities as a writer and teacher proved an important resource for the Church.

⁵⁸ See *Minutes*, 1943, p. 243.

⁵⁹ See article by J. Vincent Nordgren, "Elementary Christian Education in the Augustana Synod," in *After Seventy-Five Years*, op. cit., pp. 268ff.

The first project which Dr. Nordgren was asked to undertake was the preparation of a new course of Sunday school studies. The result was the creation of a series of courses beginning with the nursery department and extending through the high school age, and known as *The Word of Life Series*. To introduce the new series, and help Sunday school teachers to understand and effectively use the new materials, Dr. Nordgren and his staff traveled throughout the Church conducting Sunday school teacher's training programs, workshops, and institutes. And although the Word of Life Series did not meet with universal approval throughout the Church, it proved to be such an effective aid to parish education that it continued in use until supplanted by the courses offered by the Long-Range Program.

As a supplement to the Word of Life Series, the Board of Christian Education and Literature sponsored the creation of another series of Sunday school courses known as *The Christian Growth Series*, which were prepared in co-operation with other Lutheran Church bodies.⁶⁰

After having served for nearly seventeen years as director of parish education, Dr. Nordgren submitted his resignation in 1947. As his successor the board called Pastor Lael Westberg of Minneapolis, Minnesota, who began his work in the summer of 1948. Dr. Westberg continued in office until 1962, when he resigned to accept a call to become the first pastor of the American congregation in Stockholm, Sweden. During his period of service as director of parish education, Westberg distinguished himself as an effective promoter of an improved program of parish education, conducting seminars, workshops, and institutes for Sunday school teachers in all parts of the Church.

In 1955 the *Board of Parish Education of the United Lutheran Church* invited the churches belonging to the National Lutheran Council to co-operate in the preparation of a *Long-Range Program of Parish Education*. This co-operative effort sought to pool the insights, experiences, and resources of the participating bodies in the creation of a program of parish education which would take into account the contemporary advances in both education and theology, and provide the Lutheran Church with a more adequate and effective approach to its teaching ministry at the parish level than had hitherto

⁶⁰ This co-operative endeavor included representatives from the Augustana Church, the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church. See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1947, p. 36f.

been possible. In the various stages of preparation and field testing of the Long-Range Program, the Augustana representatives, led by Dr. Westberg, took an active part. Several Augustana people were recruited for the permanent Long-Range staff. These included Dr. Frank Bonander, Dr. Leroy Norquist, Pastor Paul Cornell, Sister Gertrude Hill, Miss Beverly Schultz, Miss Doris Smith, Miss Ruth Swanson, Pastor Fred Benson, Pastor Arvid Anderson, and Pastor James Claypool.⁶¹

Offering the Lutheran Church in America a parish curriculum which seeks thoroughly to ground people of all age groups in Bible knowledge and basic Christian truth, the Long-Range Program builds upon the foundations which were laid by the efforts of those who earlier invested their lives in the task of fostering more adequate programs of parish education throughout the Lutheran Church.

The Educational Influence of the Church Press

If the concept of education may be given a broad interpretation, the whole enterprise of a church press can also be considered as a part of the educational activity of the church and ought to be seen in this connection as a response of the church to the needs of the people which helped to shape the Augustana tradition.

Long before the Synod itself was organized the leaders of the Scandinavian immigrants in America recognized the need of providing their scattered countrymen in the new world with a type of literature which would be educative in its effect; which would warn and admonish against existing dangers, encourage and invite the newcomers to relate themselves to existing groups of their own people, and in general orient them in the new ways of American life. One of the very first endeavors along this line was a small tract which Pastor L. P. Esbjörn prepared and published in 1851, entitled "Välkomst-Helsning till den Svenska, Norska och Danska Emigranten" (Greetings of Welcome to the Swedish, Norwegian and Danish Immigrant).⁶² The purpose of this tract was to counsel the Scandinavian newcomer regarding both spiritual and temporal matters, and to inform him about the settlements which were springing up in the Mississippi Valley.

In 1854, when the Baptist missionaries were threatening to disrupt

⁶¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1962, p. 268.

⁶² Printed by H. Ludvig Co., Vesey Street, New York, in an edition of 4,000 copies. See F. A. Johnson, "The Publishing Interests of the Augustana Synod," *The Augustana Synod, 1860-1910*, Rock Island, 1910, pp. 173-197.

the work among the Lutherans, Esbjörn prepared and published a polemical tract entitled "Några enkla Frågor och Svar rörande Döpselsen" (Some simple Questions and Answers regarding Baptism).⁶³ The object of this brochure was to inform the reader regarding the real points at issue in the doctrinal dispute between the Baptists and the Lutherans, and to reinforce the doctrinal loyalty of Lutherans regarding infant baptism.

The same year, 1854, the United Scandinavian Conference, meeting in Chicago, voted to print six hundred copies of the minutes in each language, Swedish and Norwegian, so that the people throughout the congregations might be informed regarding the joint activities of the Chicago and Mississippi Conferences.⁶⁴ At the same meeting a circular letter was drawn up, on behalf of the pastors and congregations associated with the conference and addressed to "their brethren in the faith and countrymen, who live scattered here and there in the wide plains of America."⁶⁵ This letter, which was meant to appear in several newspapers throughout the country, called upon the scattered Scandinavians to remain faithful to their religious heritage, to make earnest efforts to provide for temporary spiritual care until ministers could be supplied for them, and to inform the leaders in Illinois of their whereabouts and present circumstances.

As the tide of immigration increased and new settlements and new congregations came into being the need for a Swedish language newspaper which could speak to this growing community in America became imperative. Pastors Esbjörn, Hasselquist, and Erland Carlsson were the initial promoters for the launching of a Scandinavian newspaper, but it was Hasselquist who undertook the long journey to New York to purchase a small printing machine which he installed in his own home in Galesburg, and who assumed the editorship of the new Swedish journal which bore the name *Hemlandet, Det Gamla och det Nya* (The Homeland, the Old and the New).⁶⁶ The first issue of this semi-monthly politico-religious newspaper appeared January 3, 1855. Regarding its significance a perceptive commentator has declared:

⁶³ This pamphlet is said to have been financed by Pastor William A. Passavant who was interested in helping the Scandinavian immigrants maintain their strength and unity.

⁶⁴ Minutes of Chicago-Mississippi Conference, Chicago, January 4-9, 1854, translated in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 90-97.

⁶⁵ Translation of this circular letter at the conclusion of Minutes, *Ibid.*, pp. 95ff.

⁶⁶ C. A. S., "Augustana synodens förläggareverksamhet," *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-252.

Hemlandet became a welcome visitor in many homes. It served as a bond of union among the Swedes, who, though separated by hundreds of miles, still felt drawn toward one another by kindred ties. It also became a means of communication between them and the friends and kindred forever left behind in the dear old "homeland." Again it served to instruct the newcomers in the political, social, and religious questions of their "new homeland." . . . On the great moral and political questions of the day—slavery, know-nothingism, and temperance—*Hemlandet* gave no uncertain sound. The most complicated questions were discussed by the editor in that clear and simple style which was so peculiar to him.⁶⁷

In addition to *Hemlandet*, the little printing shop in Hasselquist's home published about a dozen books and pamphlets within a few years after its establishment, including an edition of *Luther's Small Catechism*, the *Augsburg Confession*, a book about Luther, and a collection of Ahnfelt's songs. These were distributed at low cost to the Scandinavian congregations. By 1856 *Hemlandet* had become primarily a political journal, therefore Hasselquist began the publication of another biweekly newspaper, *Det Rätta Hemlandet* (The true Homeland), which was devoted exclusively to religious subjects. Since Hasselquist desired his countrymen to read both papers, he published them on alternate weeks, giving the Swedes in America a weekly press.⁶⁸

During the next few years *Hemlandet* became increasingly devoted to political and social discussions, while *Rätta Hemlandet* was almost exclusively a devotional and theological journal. Thus, after the Augustana Synod was organized, there was need for a paper which would be an institutional organ, primarily concerned with the affairs of the Synod. A church monthly called *Augustana* began publication, October, 1868, edited by Dr. Hasselquist, which was combined a year later with *Rätta Hemlandet*, and called *Rätta Hemlandet och Augustana*. This was the parent journal which after 1889 bore the title *Augustana* and continued to be published as the official Swedish organ of the Augustana Church until it was discontinued in 1956 because of a dwindling subscription list.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ C. W. Foss, "The Swedish Lutheran Publication Society," *Alumnus*, Rock Island, 1893, pp. 98-102.

⁶⁸ E. W. Olson, "Augustana Book Concern: Publishers to the Augustana Synod. History of its Activities since 1889, with Introductory Account of Earlier Publishing Enterprises," *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. III, pp. 3-80. See also, Minutes, Mississippi Conference, December, 1858, *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. X, pp. 153ff.

⁶⁹ See editorial in final issue of *Augustana*, December, 1956. See also *Minutes Augustana Lutheran Church*, 1956, p. 360. The evolution of *Augustana* is shown in a graph in *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. III, p. 50. The English organ of the Synod, *The Lutheran Companion* evolved from

The influence which Hasselquist and his colleagues exerted through the press cannot be estimated. It is indubitable, however, that the church press had an immense influence in molding and shaping the character of Augustana. It was from the press of their church that the Scandinavian immigrants learned their American politics and were persuaded to throw their support to the Republican party; it was from this press that they received instruction about the dangers of heresy and proselyters in a free-church and pluralistic society; it was the press that led the immigrants into the intricacies of theological debate and brought about a new awareness of the uniqueness of Lutheran doctrine; it was from the press that they were constantly admonished to remain faithful to their religious heritage, and it was the press that played a most important role in relating the scattered settlers to each other. Furthermore, it was from the financial proceeds derived from publishing activities that the Synod was able to keep the doors of its college and seminary open in times of financial stress. Thus, in several respects, the literary activities of the Synod constituted a part of the educational program which helped shape the Augustana tradition.⁷⁰

The publication work of the Augustana Church has been carried on by its own publishing house, the *Augustana Book Concern*, since 1889. The Augustana Book Concern was an indirect outgrowth of the Swedish Lutheran Publication Society, formed in 1859 to take over and co-ordinate the various publishing ventures which had emerged among the Swedes. The Publication Society functioned until 1874, when economic necessity forced the Synod to dispose of the bulk of its publishing business to the private firm of Engberg and Holmberg of Chicago. However, to carry on what remained of the synodical publishing activities, a stock company, the Augustana Book Concern was formed in 1884, which became a synodical enterprise in 1889 under the name *Lutheran Augustana Book Concern*. In 1903 the name was changed to Augustana Book Concern, and this company, in 1917,

the combination of two journals, *The Alumnus* and *The Observer*, the former published by the Alumni Association of Augustana College, and the latter by the Augustana University Association, both being launched in 1892, and combined in 1895 as *The Alumnus*. In 1907 the name was changed to *The Young Lutheran's Companion*, and since 1911 the paper has borne the title *The Lutheran Companion*.

⁷⁰ For an analysis of the influence of the literary activities of the Synod see especially Ander, *Hasselquist, op. cit.*, Chapters II, pp. 24-39, and VIII-XII, pp. 152-210. See also A. T. Lundholm, "The Printed Word," *After Seventy-Five Years, 1860-1935, A Jubilee Publication*, Rock Island, 1935, pp. 137-146. O. V. Holmgrain, *Augustana Book Concern*, Rock Island, 1914. E. W. Olson, *En Bokhandels historia*, Rock Island, 1910. E. W. Olson, *Fiftieth Anniversary, Augustana Book Concern, 1884-1934*, Rock Island, 1934.

bought out Engberg and Holmberg, and henceforth constituted the one and only publishing firm and book store of the Augustana Church. Known as "the service station of the Augustana Church," the Augustana Book Concern has rendered an invaluable service to the Christian cause by implementing the famous slogan coined by Dr. Birger Swenson, genial manager of the Book Concern since 1945, "The printed word also proclaims the gospel."⁷¹

Since the literary output of the Synod constituted a virtual exhibit of its life and growth, it became imperative that some arrangements be made for collecting and preserving this material. It was Eric Norelius who first assumed the responsibility of acting as synodical archivist, collecting, preserving and, from time to time, publishing items of historical interest. No central repository was established by the Synod, however, until the new seminary library building was erected in 1954, when a section of the second floor of the new structure was reserved as the synodical archives. Pastor Joel Lundeen of Lindsborg, Kansas, was called as archivist and director of the seminary library in 1955. When Pastor Lundeen assumed his new post in 1958, after taking special training in library and archive administration, the Church for the first time in its history had a central repository and a trained archivist to care for this vital aspect of the life of the Church.⁷²

⁷¹ The most recent history of the Augustana Book Concern is the excellent study by Daniel Nystrom, *A Ministry of Printing. History of the Publication House of Augustana Lutheran Church, 1889-1962*, Rock Island, 1962.

⁷² See Arden, *School of the Prophets*, op. cit., p. 258f.

The Enterprise of Missions

THE AUGUSTANA CHURCH began its life as a missionary undertaking, and throughout its history has identified itself with the cause of Christian missions. Indeed, it may be said that the shape of the Augustana Church has in large measure been determined by its mission endeavors. While there have been some notable failures in this part of the historical record, there have also been some solid achievements. It was in the period of its infancy that the Augustana Church established its own missionary tradition by laying the foundations upon which future generations were to build in the areas of social, foreign, and home missions.

Establishment of Social Missions

Social missions, or as it was called in an earlier day, "inner missions," seems to have been particularly dear to the Augustana Church, and a truly remarkable record has been written in this phase of Christian service. It has been pointed out that the Augustana Church, whose membership in 1961 comprised only about seven per cent of the Lutheran population of contemporary America, nevertheless owned, operated, and maintained fifteen per cent of the approximately three hundred Lutheran institutions of mercy in the United States, and of the charitable institutions in this country which were properties of individual Lutheran bodies, no less than thirty per cent were in the hands of the Augustana Church.¹ Indeed, the record concerning social missions may with a good deal of justice be called "Augustana's shining page."

The beginning of the record goes back to the years before the Synod itself was organized. Two basic causes seem to have combined to motivate the Scandinavian interest in social missions in the early years. In the first place, the immigrants had been deeply moved by the suffering they had experienced and witnessed in the course of their migration to America from Europe. Through exposure, hunger,

¹ Dr. Robert W. Holmen, "The Ministry of Mercy," *Centennial Essays*, Rock Island, 1960, p. 244.

disease, and hardship whole immigrant parties had often been decimated, parents had lost their children, and children their parents, husbands and wives had been torn from each other, and relatives and friends had suffered bereavement. The plight of orphan children was particularly pitiful and tragic, since there were virtually no organized public resources a hundred years ago to meet such human need.² And in the second place, there was the inspiring personality of Pastor William A. Passavant of Pittsburgh, who during the middle decades of the nineteenth century was the outstanding exponent in America for all kinds of Lutheran charitable enterprises.³ He was a staunch friend of the Scandinavians in the middlewest, had encouraged the formation of an independent Scandinavian Synod, and after the organization of the Augustana Synod, frequently attended synodical sessions and was afforded the privilege of the floor. It was Passavant who reminded the Scandinavians of the great need for welfare agencies, and especially homes for children to meet the needs among their own countrymen, as well as others.⁴

In response to an obvious need which Passavant forcefully underscored, the Augustana Synod at its third annual convention, held in Vasa, Minnesota, 1862, Resolved,

That the Synod admonishes all its congregations that wherever possible, an offering shall be received each year on Thanksgiving Day, or at some other appropriate occasion, for the Orphan's Home in Pittsburgh.⁵

The following year after listening to an impressive appeal by Dr. Passavant on behalf of orphaned children, the Synod voted to re-emphasize the previous year's decision to receive a Thanksgiving offering for the Pittsburgh Orphanage, and also to purchase 120 acres of land in the Paxton area for the founding of a Scandinavian orphanage.⁶ At the next two annual conventions the "Children's Home

² Norelius, *De svenska luterska församlingarnas*, etc., Vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 263f.

³ It was Passavant who brought to America the "inner mission" program of Johann Wichern of Hamburg and the diaconate as developed by Theodore Fliedner at Kaiserwerth-on-the-Rhine. Passavant founded hospitals in Milwaukee, Chicago and Jacksonville, Illinois, orphanages at Mt. Vernon, N. Y., Germantown, Pa., and Boston, Mass., and established Deaconess Institutes in Philadelphia and Baltimore. He is said to have raised more than a million dollars for his Lutheran institutions of mercy. For an excellent biography of Passavant see G. H. Gerberding, *Life and Letters of W. A. Passavant*, Greenville, Pa., 1906.

⁴ See references to Passavant's appearance on the floor of synodical conventions, *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1862, 1863, 1864.

⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1862, p. 13.

⁶ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1863, p. 8.

Committee" reported the collection of funds, and the purchase of 160 acres of land near Paxton for \$3,520.⁷ For some reason no buildings were erected on the proposed site for the orphanage, and by 1867, when talk of moving the seminary from Paxton had begun, the Synod instructed the "Children's Home Committee" to sell its Paxton holdings and arrange to move the proposed orphanage to Andover or its vicinity.⁸ The following year the Synod was informed that a small house had been built on the outskirts of Berlin as a temporary shelter for three orphaned boys who were now the wards of the church.⁹ A year later Pastor Jonas Swensson arranged the purchase of an excellent 160-acre farm a mile southwest of Andover, to which the children's home was moved and which became its permanent locale.¹⁰ Thus, by 1868 the Augustana Synod had launched its first synodically sponsored institution of mercy. Even then, however, this was not the first venture in social missions undertaken by Midwestern Scandinavians, for the Swedes in Minnesota had stolen a march on the Synod, and under the leadership of Eric Norelius, had again asserted the spirit of sectional rivalry.

Norelius had become personally acquainted with William A. Pas-savant during the latter's visit to Minnesota in 1856,¹¹ and, like everyone else, had been stimulated and inspired by this remarkable man. Just when Norelius began planning to launch into social missions is uncertain, but it is clear from the evidence that when he did take the step in 1865, it was not nearly as casual or accidental as his accounts of the matter seem to suggest.¹² As early as 1863, Norelius was quietly gathering funds in Vasa "for a home for the destitute." In 1864, the Minnesota Conference passed a resolution designating the unexpended balance of the funds which Norelius had received for the relief of the victims of the Indian uprisings as a fund "for a future orphanage." And in the spring of 1865 it is evident from existing correspondence that Norelius had invited a Mr. Charles Lindman of Chisago Lake to take charge of a proposed children's home in Vasa, where no such home as yet existed.¹³

In the month of October, 1865, Norelius made a trip to St. Paul

⁷ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1864, p. 8f.; 1865, p. 16.

⁸ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1867, p. 30f.

⁹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1868, pp. 15ff.

¹⁰ Cf. *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

¹¹ Emeroy Johnson, *Eric Norelius*, *op. cit.*, pp. 18, 64.

¹² See his account in Norelius, *Svenska luterska församlingarnas*, etc., Vol. II, *op cit.*, pp. 268ff.

¹³ For the above see Emeroy Johnson, *Eric Norelius*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

where he learned of the tragedy that had stricken the family of Mikola Eric Erikson, recently arrived from Sweden. Both father and mother had died within a few days of each other, leaving several destitute and homeless children. Asked if he knew of some way to care for the unfortunate waifs, Norelius claimed to have heard a still, small voice which seemed to command him, "Take them home with you." Whereupon he brought them to his home in Red Wing and invited his congregation to share in their care. A woman, Mrs. Brita Nilson, was engaged as housemother, and she and the children were housed in the basement of the Vasa Church, which served as the first Lutheran orphanage in Minnesota, until a house was built, a year or two later, on a plot of ground which Norelius purchased for his orphanage. The home continued as an independent enterprise by Norelius until 1876 when the Minnesota Conference assumed responsibility for its direction and support.¹⁴ Thus, the Vasa Home for children actually antedated the home in Illinois by about two and a half years, a fact which seemed to give Pastor Norelius a good deal of satisfaction.¹⁵ These two homes, the Vasa and Andover orphanages, were the first in a long succession of such agencies which the Augustana Church continued to establish during the next half century. From 1865 to 1917 fourteen institutions devoted to child care were founded.¹⁶

The establishment of children's homes was merely the initial phase of social missionary activity in the Augustana Church. As need arose, the Church responded by founding hospitals, homes for the aged, invalid homes, hospices, and immigrant and seamen's centers, each of which has in a sense been an image of the Augustana ethos.¹⁷

¹⁴ Norelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 268ff.; *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, p. 219f. M. Wahlstrom, "The Charitable Institutions of the Augustana Synod," *The Augustana Synod, 1860-1910*, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-170. Emeroy Johnson, *A Church Is Planted*, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-342. Emil Lund, *Minnesota Konferensens och dess Församlingars Historia*, Rock Island, 1926, pp. 185ff. J. A. Krantz, "Christian Service," *The Beginnings and Progress of the Minnesota Conference*, Minneapolis, 1929, pp. 37-61.

¹⁵ See his account in *Svenska luterska församlingarnas*, etc., Vol. II, p. 269f., where he contrasts the considerable preparations made for the Illinois institution with the simple and unpremeditated beginnings of the Vasa Home. It is evident, however, that social missions were neither casual nor unpremeditated in Minnesota, but that Norelius and his friends had given the matter a good deal of previous thought and consideration.

¹⁶ In addition to the Vasa and Andover homes, similar institutions were established at Mariadahl, Kansas, 1879; Stanton, Iowa, 1881; Jamestown, New York, 1886; Omaha, Nebraska, 1887; Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1896; Avon, Massachusetts, 1907; Joliet, Illinois, 1915; St. Paul, Minnesota, 1915; Stromsberg, Nebraska, 1916; Alexandria, Minnesota, 1916; Duluth, Minnesota, 1916; Chicago, Illinois, 1917. Holmen, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

¹⁷ Hospitals were established in St. Paul, Minnesota, 1882; Chicago, Illinois, 1884; Omaha, Nebraska, 1890; Kansas City, Missouri, 1906; Portland, Oregon,

Development of Foreign Missions

Although the Augustana Synod was eighteen years old before a foreign missionary was recruited from its ranks,¹⁸ the interest and concern for this aspect of Christian work was part of the heritage which the Scandinavian immigrants of the nineteenth century brought with them from their homeland. The religious revivals which were sweeping across Scandinavia during this period awakened a widespread interest in the world mission of the church, and in most parishes of Sweden and Norway where the new evangelical movement took root missionary societies were organized which endeavored to inform and inspire the people, as well as gather funds for carrying on the work. Most of the leading churchmen and evangelists in Sweden were strong supporters of foreign missions.¹⁹ It is not surprising, therefore, to find the Scandinavian immigrants in America giving a good deal of attention to foreign missions even before they had organized themselves into an independent synod. Even a casual glance at their early newspapers tells the story. After Hasselquist had launched his *Rätta Hemlandet* in 1856, he devoted considerable space in each

1912; Des Moines, Iowa, 1914; Moline, Illinois, 1916; Warren, Minnesota, 1927; Astoria, Oregon, 1927, and Ashland, Wisconsin, 1946. Homes for the Aged were established in Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1896; Omaha, Nebraska, 1903; Chicago City, Minnesota, 1904; Madrid, Iowa, 1907; Joliet, Illinois, 1908; Brooklyn, New York, 1908; Lindsborg, Kansas, 1911; Chicago, Illinois, 1911; Alexandria, Minnesota, 1916; Marinette, Wisconsin, 1917; Worcester, Massachusetts, 1920; Seattle, Washington, 1920; Kansas City, Missouri, 1921; Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1924; Duluth, Minnesota, 1930; Jamestown, New York, 1930; Oakland, California, 1925; Mankato, Minnesota, 1937; Middletown, Connecticut, 1949; Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 1952, and Deland, Florida, 1957. Invalid homes were founded in St. Paul, Minnesota, 1883 and 1960; Omaha, Nebraska, 1906; Axtell, Nebraska, 1913. Hospices have been located in Omaha and Axtell, Nebraska; Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota; Chicago, Illinois; Denver and Colorado Springs, Colorado; New York City; Vancouver, B. C., and Seattle, Washington. Seamen's Centers have been founded in New York City, East Boston, Massachusetts, and Seattle, Washington. In connection with social missions, Pastor E. A. Fogelstrom founded the female diaconate in connection with the Immanuel Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska, beginning in 1890. The Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha, comprises the most ambitious undertaking of the Augustana Church in the field of social missions and includes a hospital, a deaconess home, an invalid home, a home for the aged and a child welfare agency. See *Minutes, Augustana Lutheran Church*, 1961, Statistics, pp. 552-570. See also Holmen, *op. cit.*, pp. 236ff. Emil G. Chinlund, "The Ministry of Mercy," *After Seventy-five Years*, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-172.

¹⁸ A. B. Carlson was ordained June 11, 1878, on a call from the Board of Foreign Missions of the General Council to serve on the Rajahmundry field in India.

¹⁹ Bengt Sundkler, *Svenska Missionssällskapet, 1835-1876*, Uppsala, 1937, pp. 177-224.

issue to the subject of missions.²⁰ By 1863 the name of the official organ of the synod was changed to *Det Rätta Hemlandet och Missionsbladet* (The True Homeland and the Mission Blade), which reflects the growing interest in missions within the newly organized Augustana Church. The first issue of the renamed paper carried the following announcement:

With the new year it will be the aim of *Rätta Hemlandet* to devote itself more seriously than ever to the cause of missions. Doubtless many of its friends will appreciate this because they love to hear about the struggles, difficulties, victories, and general progress of the Kingdom of God throughout the world.²¹

In the following years the development of a growing concern and program for foreign missions within the Augustana Church was reflected in its press. From 1870 to 1873, and again from 1875 to 1877, a separate journal called *Missionären* (*The Missionary*) was published, and even after this paper was merged with *Augustana*, in 1879, the columns of Augustana publications gave substantial space to the subject of foreign missions.²² Thus, the Synod was laying a good foundation for an active program in this area of Christian work.

The first action by the Synod on behalf of foreign missions was taken at its second convention, held at Galesburg, Illinois, 1861, when the program was formally structured into the new church through the creation of a synodical foreign mission board. In response to a petition from the Chicago Conference requesting the Synod to encourage the world mission of the church, it was voted,

That a Committee for Foreign Missions be elected and that this Committee shall encourage the work of foreign missions, and shall receive contributions for this cause and expend them in accordance with the stipulations of the congregations or private donors, and lacking such stipulations, to send said contributions to the Swedish or Norwegian Mission Society.

That the Committee be composed of Pastor Erland Carlsson, E. Norelius, and Jon Swensson.²³

The Committee for Foreign Missions constituted the Synod's first *Board of Foreign Missions*, and the report which it rendered to the

²⁰ Dr. S. Hjalmar Swanson in his book *Foundation for Tomorrow*, Rock Island, 1960, p. 7, states that during 1856 *Rätta Hemlandet* devoted ten per cent of its space to foreign missions, and that beginning 1857 twenty-five per cent of the space in the paper was henceforth given to various aspects of foreign missions.

²¹ *Rätta Hemlandet och Missionsbladet*, January, 1863, p. 11, *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²² See E. W. Olson, *Augustana Book Concern*, *op. cit.*, p. 50; *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²³ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1861, p. 27.

Church in 1862 is both significant and interesting, since it not only is the first of such reports in the history of the Augustana Church, but gives evidence of the growing interest in foreign missions, as well as the first beneficiaries of the program. The substance of the report is the following:

During the year an appeal has been sent out to our congregations and pastors, which also appeared in the March 12 issue of *Hemlandet*, to embrace the cause of missions with greater love and sacrifice. The committee has been gratified to learn that the majority of our congregations conduct missionary services. Some have even begun to receive offerings, and as the treasurer's report indicates, receipts for the year total \$223.61, of which \$201.61 has come from Swedish and \$22.00 from Norwegian congregations. In accordance with the stipulations of the Synod and the donors, \$100 has been sent to the Swedish Mission Society in Stockholm to be used for the mission in India; \$100 to the Hermansburg Mission, and \$3.25 has been expended for postage. The balance in the treasury totals \$20.36. . . . The Committee recommends that a sermon on foreign missions be delivered at every synodical convention. May the Lord awaken a true missionary spirit in us in order that we and our congregations shall be quickened unto a burning love and zeal for the advancement of God's kingdom.

Respectfully,
 Erland Carlsson
 Jon Swensson
 E. Norelius²⁴

The Swedish Mission Society in Stockholm was the organization favored by the evangelical movement in Sweden and which, therefore, commended itself to the Augustana Church. Its field was the Tamil area in India. The Synod continued to send contributions to the Swedish Society until 1867, after which funds were sent directly to the Indian field until 1874.²⁵ After the *National Evangelical Foundation* (Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen) entered the field of foreign missions, initiating work in East Africa in 1866, the Augustana Synod transferred its support for Swedish missions to this organization and continued to contribute to its program for more than a quarter of a century.²⁶ The Hermansburg Mission was sponsored by Pastor Claus Harms of Hermansburg, Germany, and occupied a field in Natal, India. Augustana contributed to this field until 1869.²⁷ The treasurer's

²⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1862, p. 10.

²⁵ Swanson, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 11ff.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9f.

report of 1865 indicates that a sum of \$400 had been sent to the Norwegian Mission Society, the organization in Norway backed by the Haugeans and therefore supported by the Augustana Norwegians. Most of the money for foreign missions raised among the Augustana Norwegians seems to have been sent to this Society.²⁸ Thus the first foreign mission endeavors of the Augustana Synod were directed toward the support of these four European societies.

An important, and in some respects unfortunate, change of administration of the foreign mission program occurred in 1866 when the following resolutions were adopted:

That a mission's committee be established which shall take charge of both home and foreign missions and that Synod shall designate from the committee membership the corresponding secretary and the treasurer.

That all contributions, whether for home or foreign missions be deposited in a single treasury to be known as the mission treasury, and that half of these funds be used for home missions, and half for foreign missions, unless otherwise specified.²⁹

As far as foreign missions is concerned, it was unfortunate that by this action both home and foreign missions were brought under the jurisdiction of one board. It must be recalled that this action was taken just after the close of the Civil War when immigration from Europe began to swell to tidal wave proportions, bringing hundreds of thousands of Scandinavian immigrants into the Middle West. The central mission board therefore found itself almost completely preoccupied with the enormous task of home missions—of sweeping as many of these immigrant newcomers as possible into the Augustana Church. The result was that foreign missions came to be treated almost as an afterthought; at least, it was given secondary consideration.³⁰

The perhaps unwitting subordination of foreign missions is evident in the constitution for the Board of Missions which the Synod adopted in 1870. The constitution is primarily concerned with home and social missions and gives specific directions regarding the prosecution of this phase of missions. However, there are only two brief and wholly inadequate statements regarding foreign missions, and in both cases the references are to "contributions for both home and

²⁸ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1865, p. 17; 1866, p. 39; 1867, p. 19; 1868, p. 12; 1869, p. 17.

²⁹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1866, p. 39.

³⁰ Swanson, *op. cit.*, p. 13f.

foreign missions.”³¹ The document gives no directives for launching a synodically sponsored foreign mission project; it makes no provision for recruitment or training of foreign missionary personnel; it has nothing to say about establishing specific foreign fields for the Augustana Church, and it draws no blueprints for any kind of expression of foreign mission activity. In brief, foreign missions as envisaged in the constitution of 1870 and carried on under the central board was literally consigned to a haphazard existence. The enterprise of foreign missions in the Augustana Synod was operated under these conditions until 1923, when a separate Board of Foreign Missions was finally created.³²

While the Synod’s earliest efforts were expended in support of European missionary societies, the hope was frequently expressed that the Synod might establish its own independent program. But there was considerable reluctance to strike out in this direction, and when the Synod did seek independent outlets for its foreign missionary impulses its early approaches seem to have been rather myopic, and proved to be abortive.

The first timid step in the direction of an independent project was inspired by Pastor P. A. Ahlberg, head of the mission school in Ahlsborg, Sweden. He repeatedly urged the Synod to launch a program of evangelization among the American Negroes.³³ At the synodical convention at Carver, Minnesota, 1868, the Missions Committee reported that,

Several letters have been received from Pastor P. Ahlberg regarding a mission among the emancipated Negroes in the southern states. Pastor Ahlberg, who is deeply interested in such a mission and has already some preparations for it, is desirous that said mission shall be conducted in co-operation with the Augustana Synod and therefore requests our reaction and counsel.³⁴

To this overture from Sweden the Synod is reported to have responded “with great joy” and voted to begin training qualified young men for this work and to gather funds for the undertaking, in the hope of making Texas and Florida the fields of operation.³⁵

Some lively correspondence evidently passed between the Synod

³¹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 37f.

³² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1923, p. 97f.

³³ Though the mission to the Negroes would center in the Southern States of the U. S. A. it was considered as “foreign” missions and handled by the synod under this classification.

³⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1868, p. 13.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

and Pastor Ahlberg during the next couple of years, and the Synod actually invited Pastor Ahlberg himself to come to America and enter the missionary service of the Synod. In 1875, however, the Missions Committee reported that difficulties had arisen with the consequence that neither Negro missions nor other alternative projects, such as an Alaskan venture, had been undertaken. The report then concludes by asking the Synod to consider carefully "whether the time has yet arrived for initiating an independent mission among foreign people as long as manpower is insufficient among us to meet the needs of our own people, who after all are more congenial and receptive to God's Word than any other people." With that report which virtually invited the Church to do nothing, the enthusiasm for a mission to the liberated Negroes evaporated and received at that time no more serious synodical attention.³⁶

The second attempt to launch an independent "foreign mission" project was also inspired not by the Church or its central board, but by an individual pastor, and like the ill-fated Negro mission, did not venture to go beyond the boundaries of the United States, and may be said, as in the former case, to have been "foreign" missions only in the sense that it was not directed toward Scandinavians. This effort was initiated by Pastor Olof Olsson, who came to America from Sweden in 1876 with a deep and earnest concern for the evangelization of the American Indian. Indeed, it is said that interest in missionary work among the American Indians was an important factor in the decision of Olsson to come to this country.³⁷ On the basis of Olsson's recommendations to Synod in 1876,³⁸ Pastor J. Telleen was commissioned to inspect Indian Territory in the hope of establishing an Augustana mission among the natives. Telleen's exploratory trip through the Territory was reported to Synod in 1877.³⁹ On the strength of Telleen's recommendations, Matthias Wahlstrom was ordained, 1879, on a call to become a missionary for the evangelization of the American Indians. Difficulties with the governmental agencies, the illness of Wahlstrom, and the lack of aggressive and co-ordinated

³⁶ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1875, p. 22. By 1954, when St. Philip's Lutheran Church, Oakland, California, was organized, Negro missions had become a project under the jurisdiction of the Board of American Missions.

³⁷ Emery Lindquist, *op. cit.*, p. 54. For biographical sketches of Olsson see E. W. Olson, *Olof Olsson, The Man, His Work, and His Thought*, Rock Island, 1941. Johannes Nyvall, "O. Olsson," *Korsbaneret*, 1901, pp. 142-166.

³⁸ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1876, pp. 26-28.

³⁹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1877, pp. 17-19. A graphic account of this thrill-packed journey is given in *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, pp. 195ff.

efforts by the Mission Board combined to discourage the work, so that after Wahlstrom's resignation in 1881, this project came to an end.⁴⁰

With the Indian mission ending in failure, the Synod in 1882, turned to the Mormons in Utah, and especially to the Swedish converts of Joseph Smith's heresy, who "have a greater demand on our sympathies than the heathen, since their condition is in many respects more pitiable than that of the real heathen."⁴¹ The Synod authorized the Utah mission and voted to transfer to this work the remaining funds which had been received for the evangelization of the Indians.⁴² The Utah mission turned out to be a very difficult and disappointing field, but the Synod continued its work there as a "foreign" mission until 1902 when it became a part of the Synod's home missions program.⁴³

Having taken these first tentative steps, the Synod launched its first overseas mission in 1888 when it initiated a mission in Persia (Iran) which was begun by a Lutheran pastor, Knanishu Moratkhare, who appealed to the Synod for help. The Synod continued to support this enterprise until 1912, when because of difficulties on the field, lack of continued interest at home and within the board, support was summarily discontinued. A somewhat similar situation developed in connection with the second overseas venture, when an Augustana theological student, G. Sigfrid Swensson, persuaded the Synod to begin work in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 1898. This project was continued until 1918, when the Synod relinquished its work there and turned it over to the newly formed United Lutheran Church in America, since this body was carrying on the extensive Puerto Rican mission inherited from the General Council.⁴⁴

A somewhat more encouraging chapter in the development of a foreign mission program begins when the Augustana Synod became a member of the General Council in 1870, and from that time co-operated in supporting the Lutheran work among the Telegu people in Rajahmundry, India. No great enthusiasm for this project was evinced by the Synod until Pastor and Mrs. A. B. Carlson, products of the Synod, entered the service of the Council as missionaries at Rajahmundry in 1878.⁴⁵ Pastor Carlson did much to awaken a new

⁴⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1881, p. 59.

⁴¹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1882, p. 53f.

⁴² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1882, p. 61.

⁴³ Cf. Norelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-110.

⁴⁴ Swanson, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-24.

⁴⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1878, p. 49. Swanson, *Our Missionary Pioneers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-36.

zeal and interest for foreign missions in the Synod. Through personal correspondence and articles in the church press, he appealed for greater interest and support. In one such appeal he declared,

Even though you should turn deaf ears to my pleading I shall not cease to call, yea, if you muffle your ears, I will in the name of my Savior place the written words before your eyes, presenting to you as long as God permits me to live in this house of clay the needs of these poor Hindus. I am not pleading my own cause but the cause of my Lord and the poor heathen for whom His blood was shed.⁴⁶

During the period from 1870 to 1918 while the Augustana Synod was a part of the General Council, thirteen recruits, seven men and six women, served as Augustana representatives on the Telegu field. After 1918, the Augustana Church co-operated with the United Lutheran Church in America in continuing to support the work, sending forth four men and nine women, and making annual financial contributions to the field.⁴⁷

In any survey of the foreign missionary activities of the Augustana Church it is evident that the Synod was not prepared to move as rapidly and decisively in this field as in some of its other undertakings. Here the early steps seem to have been somewhat hesitant, fumbling, irresolute, and even disorganized in contrast to the vigorous approach to home and social missions. And indeed, it may very well be that just because the Synod was taking such bold action regarding mission causes closer at hand, there was too little time, effort, and resources remaining for the young church to give adequate attention to its own world mission. It is evident too, that the real initiative for what was being done came not from the official supervising agency, but from venturesome individuals who goaded the Synod into action which it seems to have been reluctant to take.

Nevertheless, though the early activity on behalf of foreign missions might have been hesitant and fumbling, it was enough to awaken the Synod to its obligations and opportunities as a responsible partner in the evangelization of the non-Christian world. These early efforts were, therefore, laying the foundations for the truly important work which Augustana was to undertake during the twentieth century in

⁴⁶ Augustana, 1880, p. 429, quoted by Swanson, *Foundation for Tomorrow*, op. cit., p. 37.

⁴⁷ The story of the Telegu Mission and the part Augustana has had in this project is given in *Ibid.*, pp. 34-65. O. J. Johnson "Our Mission Abroad," *After Seventy-Five Years*, op. cit., pp. 199-219. Peter Peterson, "The Missionary Enterprise," *The Augustana Synod, 1860-1910*, op. cit., pp. 73-88.

China, Africa, and elsewhere. The awareness of its world-wide obligations and opportunities, and the activities which therefrom eventuated, constitute a part of those forces and factors which have given shape to the Augustana tradition.

The Expansion of Home Missions

Of all the activities in which the Augustana Church engaged, no single enterprise has had a more decisive role in shaping the geography, the spirit and the structure of the Augustana Church than the endeavor which has often been called "the chief task of the Synod," and known by its earliest name as "Home Missions," and more recently, "American Missions." When Dr. L. G. Abrahamson recorded the story of "Hemmissionen" in the *Jubilee Album* of 1893, he defined home missions in the terms by which it was both interpreted and implemented for the first half-century of the Synod's existence. He declared that home missions is "that activity which contemplates the ingathering within the fold of our church our scattered countrymen throughout this land."⁴⁸ It was only after the cessation of the great immigration, following World War I, that the Augustana Church began to perceive that the definition was too narrow, and that Augustana home missions must henceforth envisage the evangelization of the entire community without being limited to particular social or nationalistic categories. It is this larger concept of home missions which is implicit in the term *American Missions*. In any event, the foundations for American Missions in the Augustana tradition were laid in the days when the enterprise was conceived and expressed in the narrower sense of *home missions*.

The year that the Augustana Synod was founded, 1860, the national census reported that there were 18,625 people of Swedish birth residing in the United States. That same year the Synod reported 3,747 Swedish communicants on its membership rolls, or 20.1 per cent of the Swedish population in this country. Ten years later, in 1870, the national census recorded 97,332 Swedish residents in the U. S. A., while the Augustana Synod reported 16,376 Swedish communicants, which amounted to 16.8 per cent of the total Swedish population.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁴⁹ Figures and statistics taken from Olga W. M. Wold, *The History of the Augustana Synod, 1860-1870*, *op. cit.*, appendix, Table II, p. 109. See also Florence Edith Janson, *The Background of Swedish Immigration, 1840-1930*, Chicago, 1931. *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, appendix, Kyrklig Statistik; 1870, appendix, Kyrklig Statistik.

That means that in the first ten years of its existence the growth of Augustana did not equal the percentage gain of the total Swedish population in this country. In other words, the program of home missions during the first decade was slightly less successful than similar efforts had been among the Midwestern Scandinavians before the Synod was organized.

It must be acknowledged, however, that even this achievement was no small accomplishment, since the rate of immigration was steadily increasing, the stream of immigrants scattered into widely separated settlements, and the synodical resources of men and means were very meager.

At the same time, however, the failure to win a larger percentage of the newcomers must be attributed in part to the inefficient and unorganized manner in which the Synod pursued home missions during the first decade. It has been previously noted⁵⁰ that at the constituting convention at Jefferson Prairie, in 1860, a central home mission committee consisting of three members was created, which was given charge of the home mission cause. In the reports which this committee rendered in the following years, it is evident that very little central direction was given to the program by this agency. It did, indeed, give counsel when requested, and received and expended such contributions as were sent in, but it did not formulate an over-all plan for home missions.

The most important task of the central board seems to have been that of discovering those fields which were too far distant to be served by a settled parish pastor and to seek ministerial help for such settlements. Accordingly, the central board sent out a few traveling missionaries for whose support it was responsible. Among the earliest of these traveling missionaries were Eric Norelius, P. A. Cederstam, P. Carlson, C. A. Hedengren, P. Beckman, and S. G. Larson, who rendered splendid service to the Church, often under appallingly difficult and dangerous circumstances.⁵¹ For the most part, however, the work of home missions was done by settled parish pastors who visited nearby settlements as they were able, and occasionally undertook more extensive visitations. In general, however, home missions during the first decade was carried on haphazardly without adequate and well-conceived guidance and long-range planning and direction.

In the light of these circumstances, the almost anguished appeal

⁵⁰ *Supra*, Chapter 5, p. 89.

⁵¹ See Norelius, *De svenska luterska församlingarnas*, etc., *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 35-46.

which President Hasselquist voiced in his annual report of 1869, becomes all the more meaningful. He said in part,

Think of it, brethren! Out of the fifty or sixty thousand Swedish nationals who have emigrated, only about twenty thousand are connected with us, and a few other thousand united with other churches, which leaves a formidable remainder of some twenty to thirty thousand countrymen who are being lost in worldliness, sin, and unbelief. . . . Can anyone do for them what we can, we who speak their language and who have been fed with the same spiritual food, and therefore understand more intimately than others what they have lost and what they need? No! Let us in God's name redouble our zeal, our sacrifices, and above all else our prayers, that the Lord of the harvest will send faithful laborers into his harvest. The night is at hand. Woe unto us if our work is half done.⁵²

The synodical convention of 1870, however, marks a turning point and an important milestone in the development of Augustana home missions. At this time the entire program was subjected to a careful scrutiny and revaluation. After an entire day's discussion and debate a thorough revision of home missions' machinery was effected, as the Synod adopted a constitution governing the work of missions. This document is of such importance that the substantial provisions are here given in full:

Acknowledging with humble gratitude the great mercy which the Lord has shown toward us as a Church, and seeing with joy and astonishment the immense fields lying open before us, we feel now more than ever the need of a more zealous, embracing, and united missionary activity within our Synod, and to the promotion thereof the following regulations are adopted:

Article I

1. The missionary activities of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod shall be under the direction and control of a mission committee elected by the Synod and known as the Central Home Mission Board of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod.

2. The Board shall consist of four pastors and four laymen, together with the president of the Synod as ex officio member . . .

3. It shall be the duty of this Board to see to it that our widely scattered countrymen are provided with the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments and for that purpose call and commission itinerant preachers, catechists,

⁵² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1869, p. 8. President Hasselquist's figures were incorrect. At the time there were approximately 97,000 Swedish nationals in the U. S. and communicant membership of the synod was 16,162.

and colporteurs, determine their salaries and field of labor and receive and disburse funds for both home and foreign missions.

5. The Central Board shall present a written report to the Synod at each convention, not only of funds received, but also of the work as a whole.

Article II.

1. Each conference of the Synod shall constitute a mission district.

2. The president of each conference shall represent the Central Board and together with two pastors and two laymen elected by the conference constitute the Conference Home Mission Board.

3. The conference shall hold mission meetings once a month or as often as possible and for this purpose the conference may divide its territory into several districts. Quarterly meetings, or at least two meetings a year, shall be held by each conference. Missionary addresses and services for edification shall be held at these meetings, also discussions of theological, Christian, and practical subjects, and the missionary activities within the district given careful consideration. The itinerant preachers, catechists, and colporteurs shall present written reports of their work at these meetings.

4. The mission board of each conference shall endeavor to find suitable and qualified men and recommend them to the Central Board, and if they are accepted, determine the nature of their work and their field of labor, and exercise careful supervision over their work and conduct. The president of the conference shall give a written report at least each quarter to the Central Board concerning the mission work and the general condition in the district, together with a statement from the treasurer of money collected and spent within the district.

5. Each conference shall not only endeavor to awaken within its own congregations a true Christian spirit and zeal for missions, but endeavor to introduce a regular system for the ingathering of funds for the mission and other Christian benevolent institutions. Money gathered for special purposes, such as education, orphan's homes or hospitals shall be sent directly to the board involved, but funds for missions, whether home or foreign, shall be sent to the Central Board. The mission board of each conference shall, however, have the right to use more or less of the home mission funds which it collects on its own field.

Article III

1. Prayer services for missions shall be held in each congregation once a month, and under the leadership of the Conference Mission Board a systematic program of benevolence shall be introduced.

2. The church council in each congregation shall, as far as possible, constitute the mission board of the congregation, and as

such shall exert its power and influence to promote the cause of missions by organizing sewing societies, gathering mission funds and conducting prayer services for missions.⁵³

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this action taken by the Synod in 1870. It was undoubtedly the most far-reaching reorganization which the Synod had undertaken since its inception. The entire administrative structure of the church was tightened and improved, and though, as has been noted in connection with the discussion on foreign missions, not every department of activity profited from this reorganization, it is indubitable that the general life of the Synod, and particularly home missions, was greatly benefited. Moreover, the conferences emerged with new significance, and thus the very structure of the Synod was modified.

A number of specific changes must be noted. The Central Board became a co-ordinating center for the entire program with specific administrative and supervisory responsibilities in relation to both the Synod and the conferences. In its portfolio the itinerant system was of prime importance. Three itinerant missionaries were called into service, P. A. Cederstam, Olof Olsson, and S. P. A. Lindahl. Olsson did not accept his assignment, but the other two men undertook extensive visitations, the former throughout Minnesota, the latter in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri. Within a few years a substantial corps of itinerant pastors was pushing out the borders of the Synod in all directions. Among these men the following were outstanding figures, S. G. Larson, C. P. Rydholm, L. A. Hocanzon, J. Ausland, Peter Carlson, A. Andreen, and J. Telleen.⁵⁴

An even more important change was the new significance given to the conferences as the active working arms of the Synod, thus bringing the responsibility for home missions much closer to the grass roots of the Church. It will be recalled that five conferences

⁵³ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, pp. 37-43.

⁵⁴ See for example, *History of the California Conference, 1893-1952*, Glendale, 1953. Emeroy Johnson, *God Gave the Growth, The Story of the Lutheran Minnesota Conference, 1858-1958*, Minneapolis, 1958. C. F. Sandahl, *The Nebraska Conference of the Augustana Synod*, Rock Island, 1931. Emil Lund, *Iowa-Konferensens av Augustana Synoden Historia*, Rock Island, 1916. J. Edor Larson, *History of the Red River Valley Conference*, Blair, Nebraska, 1953. P. J. Brodine, "Augustana-synodens Hemmission och 'Church-Extension'" *Minnesskrift, Augustana Synoden, 1860-1910*, Rock Island, 1910, pp. 91-107. Evald B. Lawson, *The New York Conference of the Augustana Lutheran Church, Its Place of Founding*, Manuscript, 1952. E. Norelius, "Nybyggarelif, Teckningar från Minnesotas tidigare dagar," *Prairieblomman*, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-167. Alfred Bergin, "I Amerikas Dalarne, eller Svenskarne i och omkring Cambridge, Minn.," *Ibid.*, pp. 117-136.

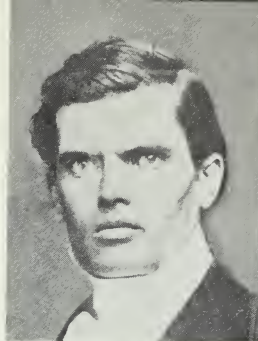
with specific geographic boundaries were designated, namely, New York, Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, and Kansas.⁵⁵ The new constitution vested in these conferences the major concern for carrying on home missions by specifying five areas of responsibility: (1) The conferences were to promote within their boundaries an ongoing program of missionary education, the purpose of which was to inform, inspire, and enlist the active support of the people in every congregation. (2) The conferences were responsible for developing existing and new mission fields within their boundaries. Since conference leaders had much more intimate and accurate knowledge of the new settlements in their own territory, they could also more easily bring local resources to bear upon existing needs without waiting for a distant central committee to act. (3) The conferences were charged with the responsibility of recruiting qualified men to act as missionaries, evangelists, and colporteurs, to recommend them to the Synod for training and assign them their specific type of work and field of labor. (4) The conferences were expected to raise the necessary funds to support all phases of mission work and to undergird its expansion. In the handling of such funds the conferences were granted substantial freedom from synodical control.⁵⁶ (5) The supervision and jurisdiction of the over-all program of home missions in each conference was to rest with the conference itself. Indeed, each conference was expected to exercise ingenuity and imagination in developing ways and means and its own strategy in the implementation of the aims and purposes of home missions. Freedom to experiment and innovate rested with each conference.

It is clear that under these new arrangements the conferences would emerge with far greater significance than they had possessed hitherto. The "chief task and responsibility of the Synod," namely, home missions, was now placed squarely in the hands of the conferences, while the Synod through the Central Board undertook responsibility for areas which were not included in the territory of any existing conference. While the Synod did not hereby surrender that authority which Hasselquist had so carefully nurtured through the years, the new conference authority which now came into being was bound to eventuate, sooner or later, in a tension between Conference and Synod. In a subsequent period this tension exploded in the so-called "constitutional debate." A further unfortunate result of the

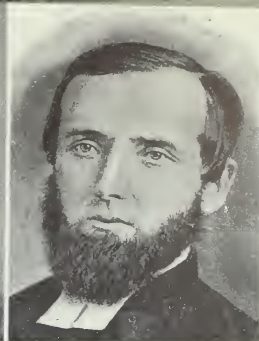
⁵⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 34. See also above, Chapter VI, p. 101.

⁵⁶ See resolution, *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1873, p. 37.

Pastors at the
Constituting Convention,
Augustana Church
Jefferson Prairie,
Wisconsin, 1860



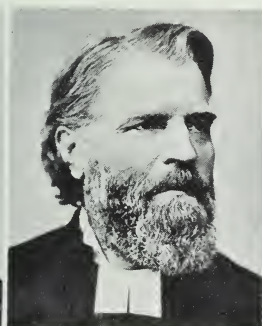
O. C. T. ANDREN



JONAS SWENSSON



HAKANSON



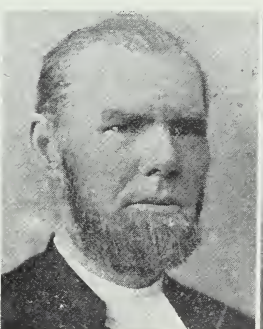
ERLAND CARLSSON



LARS PAUL ESBJORN



T. N. HASSELQUIST



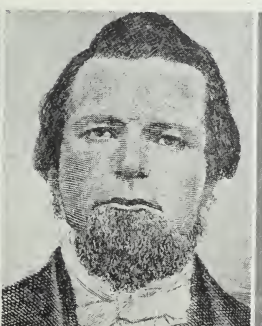
P. A. CEDERSTAM



ERIC NORELIUS



BECKMAN



J. P. C. BOREN



PETER CARLSSON



A. ANDREN

NORWEGIAN
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Jefferson Prairie,
Wisconsin

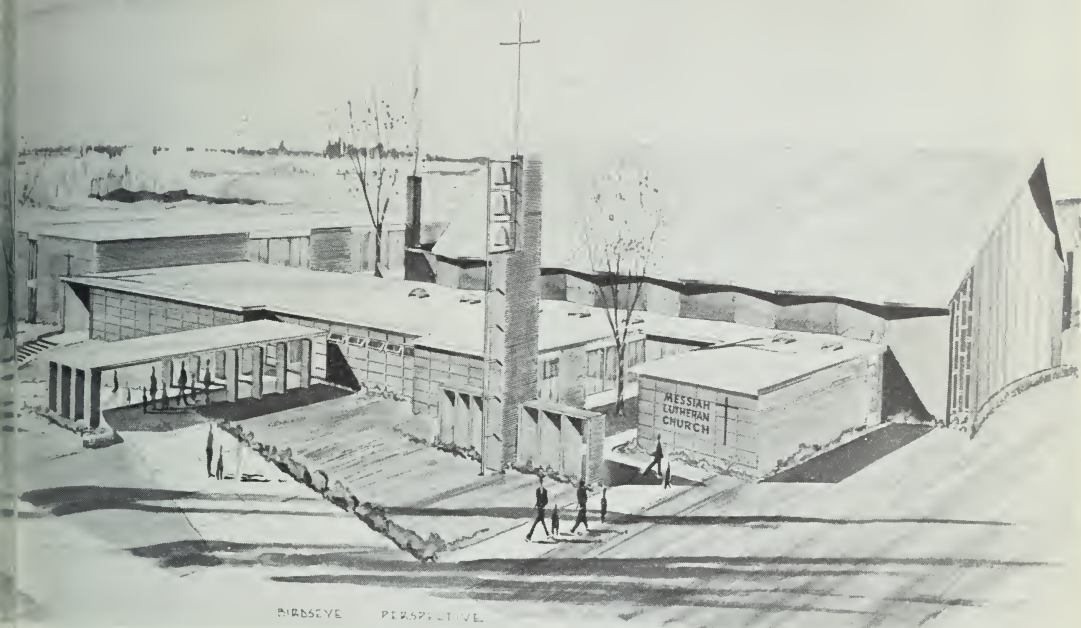
Where Constituting
Convention was
held, June, 1860



PIONEER
AUGUSTANA
CHURCH
New Sweden, Iowa

JENNY LIND
CHAPEL
Andover, Illinois





MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Marquette, Michigan. Dedicated, 1960



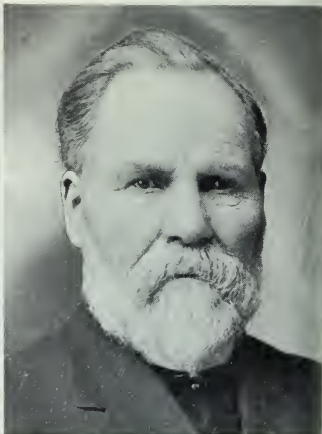
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Haney, British Columbia, Canada. Dedicated, 1961



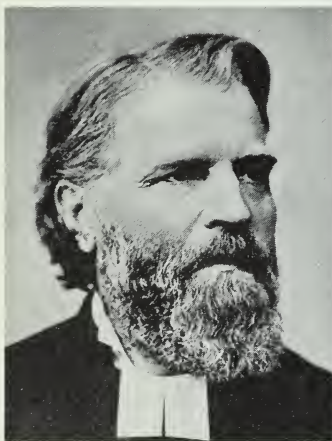
T. N. HASSELQUIST
1860-1870



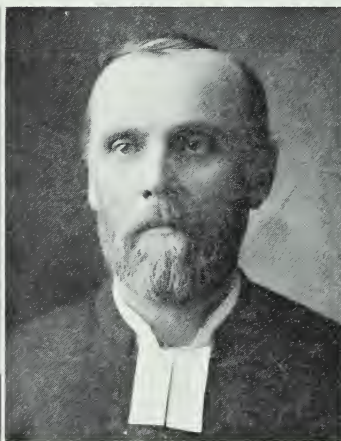
JONAS SWENSSON
1870-1873



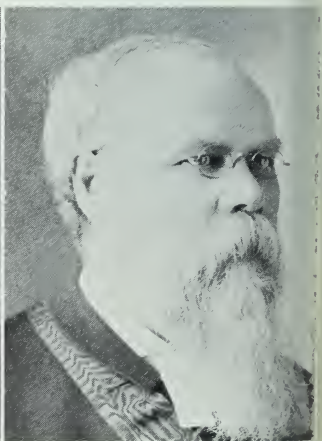
ERIC NORELIUS
1874-1881, 1899-1911



ERLAND CARLSSON
1881-1888



S. P. A. LINDAHL
1888-1891



P. J. SVARD
1891-1899



G. A. BRANDELLE
1918-1935



L. A. JOHNSTON
1911-1918

The Presidents of the Augustana Church



P. O. BERSELL
1935-1951



OSCAR A. BENSON
1951-1959



MALVIN H. LUNDEEN
1959-1962



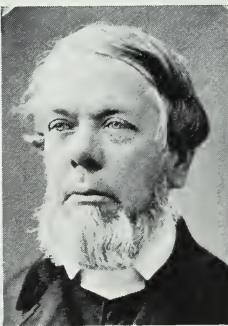
Karl E. Mattson
President, Augustana
Theological Seminary
1948-1962

LIBRARY AND CLASSROOM BUILDINGS
Augustana Theological Seminary
Rock Island, Illinois

Conrad E. Bergend
President
Augustana College
and Theological
Seminary
1935-1948
President
Augustana College
1948-1962



Lars P. Esbjörn
President, 1860-1863



T. N. Hasselquist
President, 1863-1891



Olof Olsson
President, 1891-1900



Gustav Andreen
President, 1901-1935

Augustana College and Theological Seminary, established in 1860, continued as a single synodical institution until 1948. Separation of Augustana College and Augustana Theological Seminary was finally approved at the Centennial convention, 1948. Henceforth the two schools operated as independent institutions.



CENTENNIAL HALL—AUGUSTANA COLLEGE
Rock Island, Illinois

C. W. SORENSEN
President,
Augustana College
1962-

OUR CONFERENCE COLLEGES

NEW CHAPEL, GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE
St. Peter, Minnesota





HAHN PHYSICAL EDUCATION BUILDING
Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas



NEW RESIDENCE HALLS
Upsala College, East Orange, New Jersey



SCIENCE HALL AND GYMNASIUM
Luther College, Wahoo, Nebraska

decentralization of synodical authority in the work of home missions was the almost inevitable growth of sectionalism. Since the conferences were charged with missionary responsibility for their own territories, they became increasingly aware of their own needs and correspondingly indifferent to needs beyond their own borders. They tended to keep for their own use funds raised among their own people, with the result that the Central Board, dependent as it was upon contributions from the conferences, was often unable to meet the pressing obligations or take advantage of missionary opportunities because of lack of funds. The unfortunate expedient to which the Central Board resorted was borrowing from the treasury of foreign missions, which in turn only meant that foreign missions must suffer.⁵⁷

Whatever may be said for or against the reorganized plan of home missions instituted in 1870, the fact remains that it proved so successful in the following years that it continued in operation until 1939. Under the provisions of the plan and aided by increased immigration, the greatest growth in the history of the Augustana Church occurred. In the quarter of a century, between 1870 and 1895, the communicant membership of the Synod increased more than fivefold, which was the greatest per capita gain the Synod ever enjoyed.⁵⁸

In the development of its missions programs, social, foreign, and home, the Augustana Church accommodated itself to its American environment, adopting new attitudes, modifying traditional viewpoints, creating new forms and strategies through which to express its life and faith, in order to redeem, change, and transform its environment. But it should also be noted that such a process of accommodation affected the Synod by bringing it into closer conformity with the Americanized version of institutionalized Christianity, thus helping to give shape and form to this immigrant fellowship which was seeking to serve God in the new world.

⁵⁷ See for example *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1895, p. 35, where it is recorded that the home mission treasury owed the foreign mission treasury \$10,723.36, whereupon the Synod declared the indebtedness cancelled! See also *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1904, p. 62, where Epiphany offerings in the amount of \$2,453.14 are declared full restitution for indebtedness to foreign missions amounting to more than \$10,000.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Minutes*, Augustana Lutheran Church, 1961, statistical table, p. 770.

Quest for Fellowship

THE RESPONSE OF THE AUGUSTANA SYNOD to the needs and demands of its environment constituted only a part of the process by which the contours of the Synod were determined. Of no less significance in the same process were *the various relationships and associations* which were established and developed both prior to and during the early course of the Synod's history. These relationships both expressed and helped form many of the basic attitudes characteristic of the Augustana ethos.

Affiliation with the Synod of Northern Illinois

The connection which the Scandinavian Conferences, Chicago and Mississippi, formed with the Synod of Northern Illinois in 1851 may be said to have been a *relationship of expediency* in the sense that its primary motivations were strictly pragmatic. The Scandinavians were obviously not drawn to the Synod of Northern Illinois by any ties of a common language, culture, or custom. Nor did the Scandinavians feel particularly close to the Synod of Northern Illinois on confessional grounds, except in the broad sense that each professed to be Lutheran, albeit the Lutheranism of the Synod was highly suspect to men like Esbjörn. From available evidence it appears that the Scandinavians sought membership in the Synod of Northern Illinois because of the very practical benefits they hoped to reap from such connections. It was expected, for example, that such a relationship would do much to dispel the sense of lonely isolation which beset the immigrants in the new world, and would enable them more quickly to discover from these more Americanized associates ways and means for a speedier adjustment to the bewildering ways of a free-church society. Such an association could also be expected to open up new avenues for help and support. Furthermore, by a pooling of resources, tasks could be undertaken, such as educational and missionary projects, which would be impossible to accomplish alone. Thus, it seemed expedient for the Scandinavians to join the Synod of Northern Illinois and,

as has already been pointed out,¹ within this association a substantial part of the motivating hopes and expectations were actually realized. Even though the relationship lasted only a decade, it was a fruitful experience in which, through differentiation and accommodation, the outlines of the Augustana Synod began to emerge.²

Swedish-Norwegian Relationships

The relationship which the Swedish and Norwegian elements in the Augustana Synod sustained toward each other constituted perhaps an even more significant association, since it was not merely a relationship of expedience but of kinship, lasting from 1854 to 1870.³

The Chicago-Mississippi Conference, or as it was also known, the United Scandinavian Conference, was composed of Swedes and Norwegians committed to a low-church, pietistic type of conservative Lutheranism, whose European backgrounds, especially in relation to the revival movements in Scandinavia and present situation in America, were in many respects very similar. Between these Swedes and Norwegians there existed a spirit of mutuality, understanding, and sympathy which eventuated in organic union when both elements joined to form the Augustana Synod in 1860.

From 1860 to 1870 the Swedes and Norwegians lived amicably together within the one synodical household. Regarding this period of association, Professor A. A. Stomberg has declared,

The Norwegian contingent in the Augustana Synod always maintained that they were given the most brotherly consideration while members of the Synod, and they stated time and again that they had no complaint to make against their Swedish brethren. A study of the Minutes of the Augustana Synod from 1860 to 1870 would also indicate that they filled a great number of places on committees and programs—quite nearly in proportion to their relative number in the Synod.⁴

¹ *Supra*, Chapter V, pp. 100ff.

² The motivations and expectations of the Swedes in joining the Synod of Northern Illinois are suggested by L. P. Esbjörn in "Berättelse om de Svenska Lutherska församlingarnas i Norra Amerika uppkomst och närvarande tillstånd, framställd vid Uppsala Erkestifts prestmöte den 14 Juni, 1865," *Utdrag ur Protokoll och Handlingar rörande Prestmötet i Uppsala år 1865*. See also Norelius, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 788-851.

³ It was in 1854 that the Chicago and Mississippi Conferences began meeting together, forming the so-called *United Scandinavian Conference*.

⁴ A. A. Stomberg, "Early Efforts at Scandinavian Church Union in America," *Yearbook, Swedish Historical Society of America*, IX, 1923-1924, St. Paul, Minn., 1924, p. 25.

The Augustana Norwegians, however, were only a minor group among a number of contending and fiercely competing Norwegian religious associations in America, while the Augustana Swedes did not suffer from such fragmentation. It was, therefore, inevitable that the Swedish section of the Augustana Synod would grow more rapidly than the Norwegian, and that in time the Norwegian element would come to feel that they were being overshadowed by the Swedes. It will also be recalled that since the major Norwegian settlements were concentrated in Wisconsin and southern Minnesota, the relocation of the Augustana Seminary in the remote village of Paxton, in 1863, was not a popular move among the Norwegians.

Thus, there began to emerge slowly and quietly a sentiment among the Augustana Norwegians favoring separation from the Swedes in order thereby to be better able to cope with their own problems of discipline and missionary demands. The final dissolution of the ties that bound the Norwegians and Swedes together in the Augustana Synod was reached through a series of events which may be said to have started in 1866.

In April, 1866, President Hasselquist called a special session of the Synod to deal with a serious problem which had arisen among the Norwegians and involved especially Pastor C. J. P. Peterson, successor of Paul Andersen in Chicago. Peterson was charged by his own congregation with schismatic and disorderly conduct. He was accused of (1) insisting upon wearing the ministerial garb of the Norwegian State Church, (2) using the ministerial handbook, liturgy, and ceremonials of the Norwegian State Church, (3) leveling unjust criticism against brother pastors, (4) disregarding the stipulations of the congregational constitution, (5) dealing underhandedly in order to accomplish his own purposes, (6) showing an unrepentant and stubborn refusal to accept brotherly counsel and (7) being guilty of insubordination toward the Synod.⁵ The Synod sat as a virtual court of review, and after hearing and weighing the evidence the Synod expelled Peterson from its ranks.⁶ Peterson strenuously objected to these "high-handed and unfair methods" of the Synod, and found a few sympathizers among his Augustana countrymen. As a consequence, Peterson was joined by two other Norwegian pastors, A. Estrem and A. Jacobsen, who now left the Augustana Synod and were promptly received into full ministerial standing by the anti-Augustana, high-

⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synodens extra möte, den 24-27 April, 1866, pp. 13-15.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

churchly Wisconsin Synod. Though this defection was not particularly serious, it received a good deal of attention, mostly favorable, in Norwegian circles, since it had ostensibly been motivated by nationalistic loyalties which appealed to the rank and file Norwegian.⁷

A further step toward independence for the Augustana Norwegians was taken in 1866 when the Norwegians established their own newspaper, *Den Norske Lutheraner*, for the purpose of more effectively reaching their own countrymen with an organ using their native tongue and devoted especially to those specific concerns which were of greatest interest to Norwegians. Such a paper could—and did—make a particular appeal to the spirit of Norwegian nationalism, and in so doing aided and abetted the urge toward selfconsciousness and separation from the Swedes.⁸

The restlessness within the Norwegian section of the Synod gave the Swedes some cause for anxiety, and though Hasselquist and his colleagues sought to maintain the bonds of unity, there seems to have been some talk even among the Swedes at the convention of 1867 about the advisability of encouraging a division of the Synod along nationalistic lines, for the good of all concerned.⁹

At the synodical convention of 1868 a long stride toward separation was taken when two resolutions were adopted, (1) to create a separate fund for the Norwegian Professorship at Augustana Seminary and place it under the sole jurisdiction of an all-Norwegian committee,

⁷ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1866, p. 20. An interesting and significant by-product of this action was the violent theological controversy with the Wisconsin Synod which resulted in clarification of Augustana's position on a number of questions, including Sabbath observances, slavery, absolution, and lay activity. See *Protokoll*, Ministerii förhandlingar, 1866, pp. 36-38. The statement regarding lay activity was especially significant, since there was much variation of interpretation among Lutherans regarding the meaning of Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession. Eric Norelius addressed this question in a series of articles in *Lutersk Kyrko-tidning* (July 15, August 1, August 15, September 15, and December 15, 1872) taking the position that lay activity must be guarded and carefully restricted in the church in order to protect the congregations from fanatics and anarchists, which was an attitude similar to Missouri and Wisconsin. This caution was approved by the Synod in 1887 when it was resolved that theological students and other laymen could serve only when approved by the congregations and the pastors, but could not administer the sacraments, confirmation, marriage, or organize new congregations on their own responsibility. *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1887, p. 22. Further reference to C. J. P. Peterson is given in *Tidskrift för teologi*, 1904, "Brev från T. N. Hasselquist till O. C. T. Andrén," and "Förklaringar," pp. 65-76.

⁸ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1867, p. 5. Wold, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁹ Weenaas makes such a statement in an article in *Den Norske Lutheraner*, February 10, 1869, see footnote, *Ibid.*, p. 26. See also Hasselquist's letter to Jonas Swensson, dated Paxton, Illinois, April 25, 1868, *Hasselquist Collection*, Augustana archives.

and (2) to select a committee of six Norwegians, three pastors and three laymen, to consider ways and means of dividing the Synod along nationalistic lines and the establishment of an independent Norwegian Augustana Synod, and to report to the next convention of the Synod.¹⁰

In the meantime through Pastor S. M. Krogness, a member of the Augustana ministerium, the Synod had negotiated with Pastor August Weenaas of Tromsø, Norway, to come to America and take over the Norwegian professorship at Augustana Seminary.¹¹ Weenaas accepted the call and arrived in Paxton in time for the opening of the school year in the autumn of 1868. He quickly became the leader of the movement for separation. He later declared that he had not been in America very long before he perceived that if the Augustana Norwegians were ever to serve as a rallying point between the two extremes of the Ellingians, on the one hand, and the high-church Wisconsinites, on the other, there must be separation from the Swedes. "For," said he, "the Augustana Synod had become a Swedish communion with a Norwegian annex and, therefore, incapable of properly understanding or effectively serving the best interests of the Norwegian people in America."¹² In *Den Norske Lutheraner* Weenaas defended separation in the following manner:

It should be emphasized from the beginning that the reason is not to be found in any lack of harmony among the Norwegians and Swedes, but the Norwegians have from the beginning been in a minority, and the disproportion between the two groups is constantly growing larger. Naturally, therefore, the Swedes will continue to place more and more emphasis upon the Swedish work. . . . The Augustana Synod people, since the leading men in the Synod are Swedes, cannot fully understand our peculiar Norwegian character and our ecclesiastical and national traditions so well that they can guide us in proper channels. . . . Furthermore, the Synod is becoming too large, so that it is hard for any one congregation to receive it for the annual convention. Business matters have come to the fore in the meetings, which have thus lost their original edifying character. The Synod is also intending to join the new organization, the General Council; the Norwegians are opposed to this, as they want to wait and see what stand the General Council will take in doctrinal questions. The Norwegians need a school of their own. In the sciences they are compelled to use Swedish texts, which is a hindrance. They do not want to offend the Swedes, but it is a fact that these have

¹⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1868, pp. 37, 48f.

¹¹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1866, p. 37. Weenaas, *Livserindringer*, *op. cit.*, p. 98f.

¹² Weenaas, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

a tendency to adopt too much of the spirit of the American college. Their extensive courses in mathematics, philosophy, and all kinds of philosophical sciences, serve to distract the thoughts and to take time away from the more important theological studies.¹³

Weenaas' criticism of the Americanized spirit of Augustana Seminary reflects his insistence that the seminary ought to be a "mission school," where the burden of emphasis would be laid upon Bible study with a few practical courses in homiletics. His chief opponent in this disagreement was Professor S. Harkey, who undoubtedly had the backing of both Hasselquist and A. R. Cervin, his colleagues on the faculty.

When the Synod met for its annual convention in Moline, June, 1869, the Norwegians, after due deliberation decided that the time was not yet ripe for separation, and asked that the question be deferred for another year.¹⁴ They did request and were granted synodical permission "to establish their own college and seminary at any time or place they find convenient," and that a fair share of the books in the library and funds in the professorship endowment be turned over to the new institution.¹⁵ In accordance with these decisions the Norwegians, led by Weenaas, busied themselves and shortly after the convention acquired a building in Marshall, Dane County, Wisconsin, and prepared to launch their new school that fall with August Weenaas as head of the institution.¹⁶

By this time the Norwegians had moved so far toward separation that it was virtually a foregone conclusion that the final break would come at the next convention of the Synod. However, the Swedes were careful not to add the slightest impetus to the move for separation and, therefore, maintained a discreet silence. When the Synod met for its convention at Andover, June, 1870, there was no hint of rupture in the president's report by Dr. Hasselquist, who was visiting in Europe at the time, nor in the report of the acting president, Pastor Jonas Swensson.¹⁷ Indeed, it was not until the fifth business session of the convention, on the third day of the assembly, that the Norwegian report concerning separation was brought to the floor of the con-

¹³ Article in *Den Norske Lutheraner*, entitled "What We Want," February 10, 1869, quoted by Stomberg, *op. cit.*, p. 27f.

¹⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1869, p. 20.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁶ Weenaas, *op. cit.*, pp. 122ff. Rohne, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-193. The stormy history relating to Augsburg Seminary is given in A. Helland, *Augsburg Seminar Gjennem Femti Aar, 1869-1919*, Minneapolis, 1920.

¹⁷ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, pp. 5-9.

vention.¹⁸ The report recommended a division of the Augustana Synod along nationalistic lines, and the formation of a Norwegian-Danish Synod committed to the same confessional viewpoint as the parent body. The new church was to sustain a relationship of cordial mutuality and good will toward the Swedish Augustana Synod, and in places where one synod already had a congregation, the members of the other synod were to be urged to become members of it. The report was presented by O. J. Hatlestad, who spoke with deep feeling regarding the love and affection which the Norwegians felt toward their Swedish brethren. Erland Carlsson responded on behalf of the Swedes and bespoke God's blessing on the new church.¹⁹ At this juncture, however, the delegates representing the Norwegian congregations in Leland, Illinois, Newberg, Minnesota, Decorah, Iowa, Jefferson and Yorkville, Wisconsin, and Chicago registered strong protests against the division of the synod. Their sentiments were expressed in the following communication submitted by representatives of the Norwegian congregation in Chicago:

To the Venerable Augustana Synod
Fathers and Brethren in Christ
Grace and Peace!

Having learned with deep regret that there is a movement on foot to divide the Augustana Synod, by withdrawal of the Norwegian congregations and ministers from said Synod for the purpose of forming a new Norwegian Synod;

Now therefore, deeming such a withdrawal at this time inexpedient and derogatory to the best interest both of the several individual congregations connected with the said Augustana Synod, and also to the church at large, We the undersigned, in our own behalf and also in behalf of those with whom we are associated, to wit; the Old Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chicago, whose deacons and trustees we are, do hereby enter our most solemn and earnest *protest against such withdrawal*; hoping that the other Norwegian congregations, hitherto associated with us in connection with said Synod, will heed this our protest, and also to exculpate ourselves from any and all participation in said movement to withdraw. Praying for divine guidance on your deliberations and for heaven's richest blessings upon the church at large, we are in the bonds of peace.

Yours,

Ivar Lawson
A. Nelson
Jens Nelson

Lewis Ivarson
Lewis Johnson
G. Halvorsen
Christian Fredrickson²⁰

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁹ *Hemlandet*, June 21, 1870.

²⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 13.

When the ballot was taken among the Norwegians the issue carried by a vote of fifteen affirmative and eight negative. Pastors O. J. Hatlestad and Eric Norelius then addressed the Norwegians and urged that if separation should occur at all, it ought by all means be by the unanimous action of all the Norwegians in the Synod, so that unity and harmony might abound. When the final vote was taken by the entire assembly sixty-two ballots were affirmative and twelve were negative.²¹ Thereupon the Synod passed the following resolution:

Since a number of the congregations and pastors of the Norwegian section of the Synod have registered a protest against separation, the Synod must express its grief over the fact that disunity has attended this matter, and kindly admonishes them to unite with the proposed Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod.²²

The Norwegians then withdrew to the old church (Jenny Lind Chapel), where they proceeded to organize the Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod.²³ A final joint session between the Swedes and Norwegians was held on Tuesday, June 21, and the synodical Minutes record the event in the following poignant words:

The business session was now interrupted in order to make room for a fraternal farewell between the Norwegian and Swedish brethren. The Norwegian contingent had, after the division of the Synod, held their sessions in the old church and had now concluded their affairs. Before leaving they wished to bid farewell to their Swedish brethren. Pastor O. J. Hatlestad spoke some appropriate parting words, thanking the Swedes for the love they had extended to them. Pastor E. Carlsson and the president²⁴ responded and expressed best wishes to the new synod. On both sides the fervent hope was voiced that, as hitherto we had been united in love, so henceforth we might sustain toward each other the relationship of sister synods. Dr. Passavant also added a few appropriate words, after which this memorable hour was concluded with prayer and the singing of psalm 124:4. With warm handclaps and deep emotion the brethren departed, whereupon the Synod resumed its deliberations.²⁵

Thus ended an important chapter in the history of Augustana. Associ-

²¹ *Hemlandet*, June 21, and 28, 1870.

²² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 15.

²³ A few months later a dissident group in the new Norwegian-Danish Augustana Synod met at St. Ansgar, Iowa, and organized a rival synod which was given the name *The Conference for the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, with Rev. C. L. Clausen as president and Rev. M. Eggen as secretary. These two rival groups from the Augustana Synod continued independent existence until 1890, when they were absorbed into the *United Synod*. See Rohne, *op. cit.*, p. 192. Nelson and Fevold, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 191-238.

²⁴ Jonas Swensson.

²⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 33f.

ation with the Norwegians had had important consequences for the Synod. The Norwegians had strengthened the Synod, participating in and contributing to every important project which the Synod had undertaken during the first decade of its existence. Association with the Norwegians had also compelled the Synod to think and act in broader terms than would perhaps have been dictated by the needs of only one immigrant group, for constant consideration had to be given to the needs, desires, temperament, and even the prejudices of the Norwegians as well as the Swedes, and thus there developed a flexibility of thought and action which discouraged the growth of isolationism, parochialism, and dogmatic exclusiveness. Furthermore, the Norwegians had by their connection with the Synod unwittingly drawn the Swedes into the doctrinal and practical controversies which raged like a fever among the several competing groups of Norwegians in America, thereby causing the Synod to become more acutely aware of what was going on outside its own boundaries and, indeed, compelling the Synod to give serious thought to its own theology and practice, and to defend itself from its detractors. Finally, the association of two different strains of immigrants, Swedes and Norwegians, working within the framework of one institution, compelled the institution to occupy a sort of middle ground which laid it readily open to the process of Americanization. As long as the Norwegians were a part of the Augustana Synod, the Synod could not become either too Swedish or too Norwegian, but must occupy a mediating position in which the American influence would be effective since isolation and insulation were neither possible nor desirable.

After the departure of the Norwegians, however, and the influx of hundreds of thousands of new Swedish immigrants during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, the Augustana Synod began to center its primary attention upon Swedish nationals, and their needs, desires and welfare. In the process of this preoccupation there developed a new Swedish temper in the Augustana Synod which remained as a chief characteristic until the exigencies attendant upon and following World War I created a new climate which encouraged a definitely American orientation.²⁶

²⁶ See O. F. Ander, "Some Factors in the Americanization of the Swedish Immigrant, 1850-1890," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XXVI, 1933, pp. 136-150. O. F. Ander, "The Effects of the Immigration Law of 1924 upon a Minority Group," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1942, pp. 343-352. O. A. Benson, "Problems in the Accommodation of the Swede to American Culture," *University of Pittsburgh Bulletin*, XXX, November, 1933, pp. 1-8. David Nyvall, "Den svenska nationalkaraktern och dess amerikanisering," *Prairieblomman*, 1903, *op. cit.*, pp. 282-292.

Membership in the General Council

It is significant that the convention of 1870 which witnessed the separation of the Swedes and the Norwegians, and the dissolution of this fraternal relationship which had endured for so many years, was also the occasion for the establishment of another and broader relationship on the part of the Augustana Synod, namely, full membership in the General Council.

The decision to join the General Council undoubtedly constitutes one of the most decisive and important actions ever taken by the Augustana Church. The decision was a *deliberate and carefully considered move to identify the Synod with a particular type of Lutheranism in America*, in association with which the Augustana Synod absorbed deep and abiding influences, and experienced a basic orientation which would go far in determining its ultimate direction and perhaps even its final historical destiny.

The Lutheran federation known as the *General Council* had come into being in 1866 as a counterpoise to the General Synod. The middle-road, conservative Pennsylvania Ministerium had rebelled, together with other Synods representing the Muhlenberg tradition, against the latitudinarian theology and doctrinal laxity of the General Synod and determined to form a new union of Lutherans. Accordingly, the Ministerium issued an invitation to all Lutherans in the United States and Canada adhering to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to meet in Reading, Pennsylvania, December 12-14, 1866, to form a new Lutheran association based on conservative principles. In response to this invitation representatives from thirteen synods gathered at Reading and took action to bring the General Council into being.²⁷ The basic principles, upon which the Council was to be formed had been promulgated in documentary form by Dr. Charles Porterfield Krauth and entitled, "The Principles of Faith and Church Polity," which after being carefully considered were adopted by the delegation. A brief survey of Krauth's "Principles" will reveal the essentially conservative character of the new federation.

Regarding the faith of the church, the Krauth theses declared that,

²⁷ *Proceedings of the Convention held by Representatives from Various Evangelical Lutheran Synods in the United States and Canada, Accepting the Unaltered Augsburg Confession*, held at Reading, Pa., Dec. 12-14, A.D., 1866, Pittsburgh, 1867. See also S. E. Ochsenford, "Causes Leading to the Organization of the General Council," *Lutheran Church Review*, V, 1886, pp. 217ff.

the true unity of a particular church, in virtue of which men are truly members of one and the same church, and by which any church abides in the real identity, and is entitled to a continuation of her name, is unity in doctrine and faith and in the sacraments, to wit: That she continues to teach and to set forth, and that her true members embrace from the heart and use the articles of faith and the sacraments as they were held and administered when the church came into distinctive being and received a distinctive name.²⁸

The unifying "articles of faith" by which both individual members and a whole church are identified are the general creeds which witness to the generic unity of the Lutheran Church and the particular symbols which witness to its own specific unity.²⁹ These symbols are useless, however, unless they are "accepted in every statement of doctrine in their own true, native, original and only sense. Those who set them forth and subscribe to them must not only agree to use the same words, but use and understand those words in one and the same sense."³⁰ Thus, the theses endeavored to guard the Council against those who, like Schmucker, might use the ancient nomenclature but would impose their own interpretation. By declaring so specifically that Lutherans are true Lutherans only when they "embrace from the heart and use the articles of faith and the sacraments as they were held and administered when the church came into distinctive being and received a distinctive name," it was hoped that "improved" versions of Lutheranism would be discouraged.

The most unique confession, and the one by which the Evangelical Lutheran Church was given its distinctive character, is the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

The acceptance of its doctrines . . . without equivocation or mental reservation make and mark and identify that church which alone in the true, original, historical, and honest sense of the term is the Evangelical Lutheran Church.³¹

This thesis points in the direction of those who would accept the Augsburg Confession as "substantially true" or would, like Schmucker, substitute an American Recension for the original. The next thesis specifically states that "the only churches . . . of any land which are entitled to the name, Evangelical Lutheran, are those which sincerely

²⁸ S. E. Ochsenford, *Documentary History of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America*, Philadelphia, 1921, p. 127.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 137, Thesis III.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, Thesis VI.

hold and truthfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.³²

In the measure that the Augsburg Confession is honestly accepted, it will be found that it not only agrees with the canonical Scriptures, but that there is an essential harmony between the *Augustana* and the other confessions of the Lutheran Church, which are: the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Catechisms of Luther and the Formula of Concord, all of which are in "perfect harmony of the one and same scriptural faith." Therefore, true Lutherans must give unqualified subscription to all of the Lutheran confessional symbols.³³

Concerning "Ecclesiastical Power and Church Polity" the theses proclaim that "all power in the church belongs primarily, properly, and exclusively to our Lord Jesus Christ . . ."³⁴ But the power "for the furtherance of the gospel" has been committed to the church through the Word and the sacraments. This is derived power and must never be used by the church to bind the consciences of men except as she teaches the truths and commands of the Lord.³⁵ In her teaching and in the application of her derived power, the church must ever be guided by the Word of God, for it is "the absolute directory of the will of Christ." Therefore the church

may set forth no article of faith which is not taught by the very letter of God's Word, or derived by just and necessary inference from it, and her liberty concerns those things only which are left free by the letter and spirit of God's Word.³⁶

By these propositions the Council would guard itself against rationalistic interpretations of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The power which is committed to the church is exercised by local congregations. A congregation comprises pastor and people.³⁷ A congregation has the right to choose its own representatives, who have the right to enter into compacts on behalf of the congregation.³⁸ When compacts have been negotiated establishing a general body or council, such council has no right to impose its will upon the congregation without the consent of the congregations. And if the decisions of any general body shall seem to be in conflict with the faith of its constituents, it is the

³² *Ibid.*, p. 138, Thesis VII.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 139, Thesis IX.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Thesis I.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Thesis II.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Thesis III.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Thesis IV.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Thesis V and VI.

duty of the synods holding membership to take such steps as shall be needed to prevent a compromise with error.

To this end it (the district synod) may withdraw itself from relations which make it responsible for departure from the faith of the gospel, or for an equivocal attitude toward it. Such steps should not be taken on any but well-defined grounds of conscience, not on mere suspicion, nor until prayerful, earnest, and repeated efforts to correct the wrong have proved useless, and no remedy remains but withdrawal.³⁹

This proposition declares the moral justification for withdrawal from the General Synod. But in order to guard the Council against unwarranted withdrawals, it was declared that such drastic steps are to be taken only as a last resort. And to further safeguard the organizational structure of the Council it was pointed out that

the obligation under which congregations consent to place themselves . . . does not rest on any assumption that synods are infallible, but on the supposition that the decisions have been so guarded by wise constitutional provisions as to create a higher moral probability of their being true and rightful than the decisions in conflict with them, which may be made by single congregations or individuals.⁴⁰

It was also declared that

in the formation of a general body, the synods may know and deal with each other only as synods. In such case, the official record is to be accepted as evidence of the doctrinal position of each synod, and of the principles for which alone the other synods become responsible by connection with it.⁴¹

Experience had taught the leaders of the Council that the official pronouncements in documentary form of a church body must be accepted as defining the position of that body, rather than the verbal interpretations given by individuals or committees. Each synod was to be judged entirely upon its own official subscription and not upon the declaration of a man or a group of men.

These "Principles" constituted the fundamental basis upon which the General Council was established. In contrast to the broad confessional basis of the General Synod, the Council sought to safeguard its existence by specifically narrowing its requirements for membership. By so doing it sought to exclude the necessity of having to deal

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Thesis VIII.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Thesis IX.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Thesis X.

with extremely disparate elements, and thereby to insure for itself an inner harmony and unity which the older federation did not possess.

While it is clear that the General Council meant to be staunchly conservative, it soon became evident, however, that it had no intention of swinging to the far right and embracing the ultraconservatism of the Missourians. The Council meant to find a mediating position between the liberal "American Lutherans" and the fundamentalistic reprimination theologians of the Walther type. This became apparent in the long and bitter debate about the celebrated "four points" which continued to disturb the Council for almost a decade. The questions were such as had been raised in the course of the quarrels and disputes initiated by C. F. W. Walther, leader of the Missourians, and which were agitating the minds of some of those who were present at the first convention of the Council, held at Fort Wayne, Indiana, November, 1867. The "four points" involved, (1) *chiliasm*, the doctrine of the millennial reign of Christ, (2) *mixed communion and exchange of pulpits*, that is, who can properly receive communion at Lutheran altars, and who may preach from Lutheran pulpits? (3) *secret societies*, involving the exercise of church discipline toward those who are members of lodges and other secret associations, (4) *the character of Council authority*, was it "advisory" or legislative?⁴²

These questions were of such a vital nature that the Council felt compelled to give its most careful consideration to the answers demanded. Committees were elected and instructed to study the points at issue and present their recommendations. These committees, which were in reality, policy-determining groups, brought their reports to the second convention of the Council, held at Pittsburgh, 1868. The reports were adopted and became the policy and official attitude of the Council, and so of its constituent synods, regarding these matters.

On the question of Chiliasm it was declared:

1. This Council firmly holds the doctrine of our Lord's coming and the associated Articles touching the Last Things, as they are set forth in the General Creeds and in the Augsburg Confession, in that sense of them which has been undisputed among all who have made a credible profession of unreserved acceptance of the Lutheran faith.

⁴² *Minutes of Proceedings of the First Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, held at Fort Wayne, Indiana, November, 1867, Pittsburgh, 1867, pp. 12, 17. See also Ochsenford, *Documentary History*, op. cit., pp. 155, 161.

2. The General Council has neither had, nor would consent to have, fellowship with any Synod which tolerates the "Jewish opinions" or "chiliastic opinions" condemned in the XVII Article of the Augsburg Confession.

3. The points on which our Confession has not been explicit, or on which its testimony is not at present interpreted in precisely the same way by persons equally unreserved and worthy of belief in the profession of adherence to the Confession, would continue to be the subject of calm, thorough, Scriptural and prayerful investigation, until we shall see perfectly eye to eye both as regards the teaching of God's Word and the testimony of our church.⁴³

The question regarding mixed communion received the following treatment:

1. The principle of a discriminating as over against an indiscriminate Communion is to be firmly maintained. Heretics and fundamental errorists are to be excluded from the Lord's Table. The responsibility of an unworthy approach to the Lord's Table does not rest alone upon him who makes that approach, but also upon him who invites it.

2. It is the right and duty of every pastor to make such examination as is necessary to determine the Scriptural fitness, in doctrine and life, of persons applying for admission to the communion . . .

5. It is the judgment of our church, now as aforetime, that it is "beyond all doubt whatever that there are many pious and holy people in all churches which have not accorded and do not yet accord in all respects with us, who walk in the simplicity of their heart, not thoroughly understanding the points involved, but in no respect approving the blasphemies which are uttered against the Holy Supper, as it is dispensed and taught in our churches according to the Institution and testament of Christ . . .

8. Our church confesses now, as aforetime, that the Holy Church Universal is pre-eminently a fellowship whose internal bond is faith and the Holy Ghost in the heart, and whose outward token is "the pure word and the incorrupt sacraments." The church is a communion of saints, to wit, the assembly of saints who are in the fellowship of the same gospel or doctrine, and of the same Holy Spirit, who renews, sanctifies, and governs their hearts.⁴⁴

With reference to the question of proper use of Lutheran pulpits, the following declaration was given:

1. The purity of the pulpit should be guarded with the most conscientious care, and no man shall be admitted in our pulpits,

⁴³ Ochsenford, *Documentary History*, op. cit., p. 208.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 209f.

whether of Lutheran name or any other, of whom there is just reason to doubt whether he will preach the pure truth of God's Word as taught in the Confessions of our Church.

2. Lutheran ministers may properly preach wherever there is an opening in the pulpit of other churches, unless the circumstances imply, or seem to imply, a fellowship with error or schism, or a restriction on the unreserved expression of the whole counsel of God.⁴⁵

In the matter of exercising church discipline toward members of secret societies, the following statement was adopted:

1. Though mere secrecy in association be not in itself immoral, yet as it is so easily susceptible of abuse, and in its abuse may work, as it has often worked, great mischief in family, church and state, we earnestly beseech all good men to ponder the question whether the benefits they believe to be connected with secret societies might not be equally reached in modes not liable to the same abuse.

2. Any and all societies for moral and religious ends which do not rest on the supreme authority of God's Holy Word, as contained in the Old and New Testaments—which do not recognize our Lord Jesus Christ as true God and the only mediator between God and man—which teach doctrines or have usages or forms of worship condemned in God's Word and in the Confessions of His church—which assume to themselves what God has given to His church and its ministers—which require undefined obligations to be assumed by oath, are unchristian, and we solemnly warn our members, and ministers against all fellowship with or connivance at associations which have this character.

3. All connections with infidel and immoral associations we consider as requiring the exercise of prompt and decisive discipline and after faithful and patient monition and teaching from God's Word, the cutting off the persistent and obstinate offender from communion of the church until he abandons them and shows a true repentance.⁴⁶

The question of Council authority presented the least difficulty, since it was affirmed that the only authority the Council possessed must be delegated to it by its constituents; in all other areas it must assume an advisory role.⁴⁷

Although these declarations committed the General Council to a positively conservative position, they still were not sufficiently conservative, exclusive, and definitive to suit the taste of the ultraconser-

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 298f.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

vatives. The ultraconservatives contended that it was not enough to affirm principles of faith, but that it was equally necessary to agree also on specific ecclesiastical practices accordant with such faith. Indeed, there must be no "open end" in either faith or practice, but all things must be precisely and explicitly stated, and practice must be controlled by specific rules and regulations. Of all the questions that proved difficult to solve, none caused more trouble than that of altar and pulpit fellowship. The Council found it necessary to deliver a number of pronouncements on this subject. At the Akron convention, 1872, the Council adopted the following resolution:

1. The Rule is: Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran ministers only. Lutheran altars are for Lutheran communicants only.

2. The exceptions to the rule belong to the sphere of privilege, not of right.

3. The determination of the exceptions is to be made in consonance with these principles by the conscientious judgment of pastors as the cases arise.⁴⁸

The ultraconservative faction demanded that no exceptions of any kind be allowed, and requested the Council to reconsider the Akron declaration. Resisting this kind of pressure which sought to push the Council to the extreme right, the federation adopted the following resolution at its convention in Galesburg, 1875,

The rule, which accords with the Word of God and with the Confession of our Church, is "Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran ministers only—Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only."⁴⁹

This declaration, known as the *Galesburg Rule*, was used as an argument by the conservatives in an effort to persuade the Council to rule for absolutely closed and restrictive communion. The question was raised, year after year, until 1889, when the Council gave a final declaration on the matter and refused further consideration. The declaration reaffirmed the Akron statement, permitting exceptions to the rule and leaving the matter to the discretion of the individual pastor. The final statement was the following:

Inasmuch as the General Council has never annulled, rescinded, or reconsidered the declarations made at Akron, Ohio, in the year 1872, they still remain, in all their parts and provisions, the action and rule of the General Council. All subsequent action of the General Council is to be understood and interpreted ac-

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

ording to the principles there determined and settled. The true purport and effect of the action at Galesburg was to add to the declaration at Akron a statement of the source of the rule, and that in all other respects that declaration in all its parts was left unchanged. The present position of the General Council is to be understood and interpreted in such a manner that neither the amendment and further explanation at Galesburg, nor the original action at Akron, be overlooked or ignored, both of which remain in full force and mutually interpret and supplement one another.⁵⁰

When it became apparent that the General Council did not intend to permit itself to be pushed into the camp of the ultraconservatives, but was determined to maintain a middle-ground position, those synods representing the extreme right wing turned their backs upon it. First to withdraw from further negotiations were the Missourians, who parted company with the Council at the time of its initial formation. Then followed the Joint Synod of Ohio, the German Iowa Synod, and finally the Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, and Michigan Synods.⁵¹

From the very beginning the Augustana Synod watched with keen interest the development of the General Council. Hasselquist hailed the formation of a conservative Lutheran federation and looked forward to the time when the Augustana Synod would be a member.⁵² He was not ready, however, to make unqualified commitments until he saw just how far to the right the Council was prepared to go. As long as there was a possibility that both the Missouri Synod and the reactionary Norwegian Wisconsin Synod might join the Council Hasselquist remained noncommittal, and found it convenient not to attend the Council's first assembly in Reading, Pennsylvania.⁵³ It is not without significance that Hasselquist did not begin his vigorous campaign to bring Augustana into Council membership until after Missouri and Wisconsin had repudiated the federation.⁵⁴

Membership in the General Council was not a popular subject in all sections of the Augustana Synod. The Norwegians seem to have opposed Council membership on both doctrinal and practical grounds, holding that the disputes regarding the "four points" must first be satisfactorily resolved.⁵⁵ Among the Swedes, too, there were some,

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 219f.

⁵¹ Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

⁵² See C. A. Blomgren, "The Union of the Augustana Synod with the General Council," *The Augustana Synod, 1860-1910, op. cit.*, p. 222.

⁵³ *Protokoll, Augustana Synod, 1867*, p. 7. See also Norelius, II, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁵⁴ For a discussion regarding Hasselquist's attitude in this matter see O. F. Ander, *Hasselquist, op. cit.*, pp. 108-115.

⁵⁵ Stomberg, *op. cit.*, p. 27f; Norelius, II, *op. cit.*, p. 160f.

like Eric Norelius, who were reluctant to join any association with Germans and Americans after the disastrous experiences with the Synod of Northern Illinois.⁵⁶ Indeed, from the explanations given by Norelius regarding Augustana's delay in joining the General Council, it is evident that among both Swedes and Norwegians not only a genuine concern for doctrine, but the spirit of nationalistic suspicion and prejudice, played no small part in postponing Augustana's membership in the General Council.⁵⁷

In spite of such opposition, however, the Synod moved steadily closer to association with the Council, as Hasselquist threw the considerable weight of the synodical presidency and the even greater weight of his own personal influence into the campaign to affiliate the Synod with the Council. In his personal correspondence, in the columns of *Hemlandet*, and in his annual reports to the church, he urged participation in the federation.⁵⁸ Thus, even in the years before Augustana was a member of the Council, Augustana representatives, including Hasselquist, attended the conventions of the Council and served on various committees and commissions.⁵⁹

The decisive step regarding membership in the Council was taken by the Swedish contingent of the Augustana Synod at the Andover convention, on June 21, 1870, just four days after the Norwegian separation had occurred. The following report was presented for synodical consideration:

To the Venerable Augustana Synod:

We the undersigned, have carried out the instruction given us by the Synod to attend the meeting of the General Council held last fall in the Swedish Lutheran Immanuel Church, Chicago, and beg to report as follows: We have from its very inception rejoiced at this new movement within the Lutheran Church. The General Council has not only taken its stand wholly and unconditionally on the confessional basis of the Lutheran Church, but it has also called forth new activity, greater liberality, more interest in higher education, greater zeal for organizing and maintaining new congregations, and also a greater interest in foreign mission work,—in brief, a greater zeal for home and foreign missions. All this indicates that there is a new life-energy at work and that a new day is dawning for our Lutheran Zion in this land. The committee

⁵⁶ Norelius, II, *op. cit.*, p. 160. See also Stephenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 316ff.

⁵⁷ See Norelius' explanation in *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.

⁵⁸ Ander, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-112.

⁵⁹ Hasselquist was a member of the important committee to study and report on the "Four Points" in 1868. See *Minutes*, General Council, 1868, pp. 22-25. He served also on the "English Church Book Committee." See *Minutes*, General Council, 1869, pp. 5, 39.

takes the liberty to propose that the Constitution of the General Council be now adopted by the Synod and our union with the Council be now fully established.

Respectfully,
Erland Carlsson
P. Colseth.⁶⁰

The minutes of the Synod record that the committee proposal was favorably received, whereupon the constitution of the Council was read, and each article approved, and finally the whole document was ratified, and the union of the Augustana Synod with the General Council thus consummated.⁶¹

Council membership for the Augustana Synod, however, was not without its difficulties and problems. It must be noted that the Augustana Synod was the only member of the Council which was a national institution rather than a "district synod" with jurisdiction limited to restricted geographical areas. The Augustana Synod conceived of its responsibility as transcending geographical and sectional limits, stretching out to include any area where Scandinavian settlements might be found. By 1870 it had its own theological seminary, its own colleges, its own publishing concern, its own home and social missions program, and its own version of "Manifest Destiny." As an institution with national ambitions, Augustana would not be likely to relinquish its responsibilities to some other organization less well equipped to do its peculiar work among Scandinavian immigrants. Thus, the Synod naturally resented and resisted what seemed to be attempts by the Council to invade what appeared to the Synod to be its own synodical prerogatives.⁶² Furthermore, while there were no significant doctrinal differences, there were differences of traditional viewpoint and practice. The Swedes came out of a pietistic background and tended to be puritanical, favoring, for example, total abstinence from liquor, and looking somewhat askance at their beer-drinking German brethren. The Swedes also favored more forthright disciplinary action against lodge members, while the Council preferred "educational methods."⁶³ More serious, however, were the disagreements that grew out of language and missionary differences.

At its convention at Akron, Ohio, 1872, the Council proposed the

⁶⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 27.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² For an interesting discussion of the tension between Augustana and the Council see Norelius, "Some Practical Difficulties in the Evangelical Lutheran General Council," *Tidskrift*, 1900, pp. 114-122.

⁶³ Cf. Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

establishment of a theological seminary in Chicago to serve its Midwestern congregations, and invited the Augustana Synod to unite in this undertaking.⁶⁴ In response to this overture the Augustana Synod adopted the following resolution:

That the Synod hereby expresses its sincere gratification at the measures taken to establish the proposed theological Seminary in Chicago . . . That in view of our unusual situation caused by the imminent removal of our school to Rock Island and the fact that our sole theological professor, Dr. T. N. Hasselquist, is absolutely needed in the college department, together with the terms and requirements enunciated in our charter, therefore, the Synod is not prepared at this time to move our theological department to Chicago, as proposed by the General Council.⁶⁵

From this response it is evident that the Augustana Synod in 1873 did not regard an English-speaking Lutheran seminary located in Chicago as a serious threat to its own institution which would be situated in Rock Island, some 175 miles west of Chicago, and serving a predominantly Swedish-speaking student body and church constituency. Thus, even Hasselquist the schoolman gave the Council's proposal for a seminary in Chicago his hearty endorsement.⁶⁶ For financial and other reasons, however, the Council did nothing tangible to implement its proposals. As Augustana Seminary grew stronger and began to prosper in Rock Island, and as the process of Americanization made the use of the English language an increasingly common practice both in the Synod and the school, the attitude of the Synod changed with respect to the idea of a seminary in Chicago sponsored by the Council. By 1885, the prospect of an English-speaking seminary in Chicago loomed as a real threat to the Rock Island institution. This threat was made more ominous by the prevailing spirit of sectional rivalry which wanted to divorce the seminary from the college and move the seminary away from Rock Island, preferably to Chicago.⁶⁷

The advocates of separation of college and seminary kept alive the idea of some sort of combination of Augustana Seminary with the proposed Chicago institution. At the synodical convention of 1887, however, the opponents of separation won a temporary victory by succeeding in having the following resolution adopted:

Whereas, our Synod owns a seminary so near Chicago, and
Whereas, the Synod has American elements well represented in

⁶⁴ *Minutes*, General Council, 1872, p. 36.

⁶⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1873, p. 41f.

⁶⁶ See his report in *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁶⁷ Cf. Arden, *School of the Prophets*, *op. cit.*, pp. 200-205.

said seminary, and

Whereas, the Synod considers that a seminary in Chicago, established at least in part for the purpose of working among us Swedes, would, under the circumstances, become an occasion of dissension and disunity, therefore

Resolved, that the synod express its conviction that the General Council ought not to establish a theological seminary in Chicago.⁶⁸

Just two years later, however, the advocates of separation persuaded the Synod to propose to the General Council that the parcel of ground in Chicago intended for the new seminary be donated to Augustana as a site for its own possible future seminary.⁶⁹

The General Council graciously rejected this proposal and made a counter proposal to donate two acres of ground for an Augustana seminary, so that two separate seminaries might be established, side by side, "where the future ministry of our English, German, and Scandinavian churches may be educated together in the unity of the common faith confessed and maintained by this body."⁷⁰ In the meantime, Professor Revere F. Weidner, member of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, and an enthusiastic supporter of the Council, who had taught theology at Augustana Seminary since 1882, was one of the prime leaders in the move to separate the seminary from the college and move it to Chicago. He agitated the issue at every opportunity, and thus earned for himself the bitter opposition of Hasselquist and other Augustana leaders.⁷¹ When it was clear, however, that Augustana was not ready to co-operate with the Council in the field of theological education except on its own terms, the Council undertook the work alone. Accordingly, on October 1, 1891, the doors of the Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary opened, with Dr. Weidner as its first president.⁷² In the words of one commentator, "The birth of the Chicago seminary was not an occasion for unmixed rejoicing in the Swedish Lutheran household."⁷³

Another source of irritation between Augustana and the General Council was the program of home missions as it related to the question of ministering to English-speaking congregations on so-called "Augustana territory." Here, as in the case of the Chicago Seminary, the Augustana Synod welcomed Council action and co-operation as

⁶⁸ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1887, p. 80.

⁶⁹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1889, p. 74.

⁷⁰ *Minutes*, General Council, 1893, p. 53.

⁷¹ Norelius, *Hasselquist*, *op. cit.*, pp. 279-281.

⁷² Ochsenford, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

⁷³ Stephenson, *Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration*, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

long as it posed no threats to the Synod. As long as there was little or no demand among the Scandinavians for an English-speaking ministry, the Synod felt no compulsion for initiating such work and was glad to turn over to others the task of providing religious services in the English language. In the decade from 1870 to 1880 the Augustana Synod had its hands full trying to meet the religious needs of increasing numbers of Swedish immigrants, and sought the aid and encouragement of the Council in caring for the needs of others in the Midwest.⁷⁴

By 1880, however, it was becoming apparent that English was intruding into virtually all phases of the life and work of the Augustana Church. In the spring of 1881, Dr. William Passavant made a trip to Minnesota to survey the possibilities of beginning English Lutheran mission work under the sponsorship of the General Council. As chairman of the committee on English Home Missions of the Council, he reported later that year that unless English work be undertaken at once in Minnesota and the upper Mississippi Valley, many Lutherans, especially among the young people, would be lost to the Lutheran Church through affiliation with English-speaking Reformed churches. Upon Passavant's recommendation, the Home Mission Committee of the General Council called Pastor George H. Trabert to serve as missionary to the Northwest.⁷⁵

This was an action which aroused the fears and suspicions of some Augustana leaders. In the opinion of the Augustana leaders, the English-speaking congregations which Trabert would organize, would be largely, though perhaps not entirely, recruited from Swedish population and located on territory which Augustana considered its own precincts.⁷⁶ Augustana insisted that all such new English-speaking congregations ought to affiliate with Augustana. The Council sought to conciliate the Synod by agreeing to a compromise at its convention at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1882, where it was resolved, "That where a mission congregation is organized out of material from existing churches in connection with the General Council, said mission congregation, together with its pastor, shall belong to the synod to which the mother church belongs."⁷⁷ This so-called "Lancaster Compromise," served to mollify Augustana for the time being, even though

⁷⁴ See the Home Missions reports, *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1872, 1874. Both men and money were solicited from the Council to aid in the burgeoning work of Midwestern home missions.

⁷⁵ See George H. Trabert, *English Lutheranism in the Northwest*, Philadelphia, 1914, pp. 25-27.

⁷⁶ See Emeroy Johnson, *God Gave the Growth*, op. cit., pp. 209-227.

⁷⁷ *Minutes*, General Council, 1882, p. 41.

it made no provision whatever for congregations which would be recruited from the ranks of those who belonged to neither Augustana nor any other Council affiliate. The Minnesota Conference was notably lukewarm to the missionary endeavors of the Council.⁷⁸ By the end of the decade, however, Trabert and his associates had organized nine English-speaking congregations. In 1890 these congregations and their pastors petitioned the Home Mission Committee of the General Council for the privilege of forming a district synod of the Council. This petition was granted, and in July, 1891, the *Synod of the Northwest* was organized.⁷⁹

The establishment of the Synod of the Northwest, which covered much of the territory occupied by the Minnesota Conference of the Augustana Synod, had some important consequences for the Augustana Church.

The majority opinion in the Synod undoubtedly held that the organization of the Synod of the Northwest, founded without the approval or consent of Augustana, was a virtual violation of the Lancaster compromise of 1882. Therefore, at its convention in Lindsborg, Kansas, 1892, Augustana voted to withdraw from further joint home mission endeavors with the General Council; henceforth the Synod would conduct its own English home mission work. At the same convention the Synod prudently voted to establish an English professorship in theology at the seminary.⁸⁰ The relations between Augustana and the Council were never again as cordial as had been the case before the home mission squabble. Indeed, the Synod of the Northwest was for many years a source of irritation, as rival congregations under its jurisdiction were here and there established in close proximity to existing Augustana churches.⁸¹ The younger synod was also accused of receiving Augustana members who were dissatisfied or under discipline because of lodge membership or some similar transgression. This ill will, which was particularly potent in Minnesota, was undoubtedly a factor in Augustana's refusal to join with the General Council in the merger of 1918 when the United Lutheran Church in America was formed.⁸²

⁷⁸ Emeroy Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 217f.

⁷⁹ *Minutes*, Synod of the Northwest, 1891, pp. 3ff.

⁸⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1892, pp. 44ff.

⁸¹ A notable case occurred in Cannon Falls, Minn., which almost caused the Synod to sever relations with the Council. See Emeroy Johnson, *God Gave the Growth*, p. 222.

⁸² It is significant that the Minnesota delegation led the fight on the convention floor to defeat the move to join the General Council in the merger of 1918. See Augustana-synodens *Referat*, 1918, p. 146.

When Augustana congregations began to petition for dismissal from the Synod, as did the St. John's church, Minneapolis, in 1894, and other newly organized congregations on Augustana territory refused to join Augustana on the grounds that the Synod was "too Swedish," the Synod was shaken out of its Swedish complacency and compelled to rethink its approach to the younger, English-speaking elements in the community. Accordingly, Augustana took its first short steps in the direction of establishing English work among its congregations by electing a committee at the convention in St. Peter, Minnesota, 1894, and charged it with the task of preparing a plan for future action.⁸³ The committee recommended that where necessary, English work be combined with Swedish in local congregations, and that an English conference be formed within the Synod.⁸⁴ No immediate action, however, was taken on these recommendations. It was not until 1898 that the Synod voted to grant local congregations and conference mission boards the right to organize English congregations within the Synod.⁸⁵ And the organization of an "Association of English Churches" within the Synod did not occur until 1908. Though the use of the English language was no longer a novelty in the Augustana Synod by that time, the "Association" rendered invaluable service to the church by keeping constantly before the Synod the needs of its English-speaking constituency. It was the Association that first campaigned for an English-language literature for both old and young in the Synod; the Association inspired and actively promoted the preparation of the English liturgy and hymnal of 1925, and introduced the Common Service into Augustana churches; it was the Association which did more than perhaps any other one agency to create a favorable climate throughout the Augustana Church for a normal and peaceful transition from Swedish to English after the period of World War I. The Association was dissolved in 1931.⁸⁶

Though Augustana's connection with the General Council from 1870 to 1918 was often beset with problems and difficulties, it was, on the whole, a richly rewarding experience. It is significant that affiliation with the Council was for the Augustana Synod a carefully

⁸³ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1894, pp. 17, 25.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1878, p. 18.

⁸⁶ For a discussion of the "Association of English Churches" see Norelius, II, *op. cit.*, pp. 512-518. See also Julius Lincoln, "The Language Question," in *The Augustana Synod, 1860-1910, op. cit.*, pp. 198-212. I. O. Nothstein, "The Language Transition," *Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 209-223. Stephenson, *Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration, op. cit.*, pp. 458-476.

considered, deliberate act of identification. The image which Augustana had of the General Council in 1870 accorded with that type of Lutheranism with which the Synod wished to identify itself. It was in this particular stream of confessional Lutheranism it wished to stand. It was by this label it desired to be known. As the Council grew in understanding and maturity, clarifying its doctrinal, theological and practical position, the Augustana Synod, as a participating constituent, shared in such clarification and maturation; it assumed as its own, in all important respects, whatever new ground the Council came to occupy in the American context. In this sense the Augustana Synod was privileged to broaden and deepen its own life and experience as it rubbed shoulders with other Lutherans, at home and abroad, and indeed with religious forces in general in America. The Council was a working partnership in which Augustana received perhaps more than it was often willing to give. In the Council, Augustana also discovered that branch of the Muhlenberg tradition with which it could heartily join hands, and with which it could have fellowship until the day that it would again identify itself with this tradition in the new Lutheran Church in America. For it is notable that the difficulties, the disagreements, and the dissolution of the Council relationship in 1918 were not predicated upon doctrinal, theological, or creedal considerations, but upon practical and tactical grounds.

The Theological Crisis

Hyperevangelicalism

TO THE LITTLE PIONEER VILLAGE OF SWEDE BEND, in Hamilton County, Iowa, there came in 1864, a young Swedish immigrant who, although only twenty-seven years of age, may be said to have embodied and symbolized a religious outlook and spirit which was destined to have very grave consequences for the Augustana Synod. The young man was Carl August Björk, from the province of Småland.¹ A shoemaker by trade, he had recently been released from military duty in Sweden, and had come to America to find a better life for himself, both economically and spiritually.

As a "Smålänning," Björk might well be expected to exhibit the proverbial eccentricities which were said to be characteristic of these energetic, superstitious country folk. But Björk represented, not so much the local peculiarities of his home province as *he symbolized the hyperevangelicalism which was becoming characteristic of the non-conformist wing of Swedish dissent all over Sweden*, and which was being imported into America via immigration.

These hyperevangelicals looked upon themselves as devout followers of C. O. Rosenius, and therefore professed allegiance to confessional Lutheranism. They were not separatists—yet.² They had, however, been growing increasingly restive under what they felt to be the heavy yoke of clerical authority, lifeless traditionalism, and heavy-handed institutionalism in the Church of Sweden. They wanted a spiritual and religious freedom limited and circumscribed not by institutional forms and traditions, but by the Word of God alone. Institutional sanctions meant much less to them than the warrant of faith born in the personal experience of grace, and the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit which enables even the most humble and unschooled

¹ For brief biographical sketches of C. A. Björk see, C. E. Backstrom, *C. A. Björk: A Memorial Biography*, Chicago, 1937. C. V. Bowman, *Levnadsteckning av C. A. Björk*, Chicago, 1934. Backstrom, Johnson and Dahlhielm, *Three Covenant Presidents*, Chicago, 1945.

² Cf. Axel Andersson, *Svenska missionsförbundet, dess uppkomst och femtiö-åriga verksamhet*, 3 vols., Stockholm, 1928, see especially I, pp. 9-96.

to interpret the truth of God. While the Church of Sweden sought to awaken and sustain Christian faith and commitment through education and nurture, the hyperevangelicals trusted in the efficacy of revivalism and the conventicle, with emphasis upon "the experience of conversion." As a consequence of this emphasis, their conception of the church was essentially Anabaptist, holding that the church must be composed exclusively of "believers" (de troende), and rejecting as un-scriptural the state-church idea of a "folk-kyrka" embracing the entire community. There must be no admixture of "spiritual" and "worldly" elements in the church, therefore the privileges of church membership must be restricted to "pure Christians," "true believers," and "spiritual people," like themselves. So in order both to foster and guarantee the purity of their own fellowship, the hyperevangelicals tended to gravitate toward each other, forming *ecclesiolae in ecclesia*—little churches within the church—small groups functioning as congregations within the congregation, meeting in their homes, or elsewhere, to read, sing, study, and worship together for mutual edification, inspiration, and instruction. When this occurred in parishes which were served by pastors whose spirituality was suspect, the practice arose of celebrating the Lord's Supper and administering baptism at the hands of laymen, without benefit of clergy, and finally these ultraspiritual non-conformists began building their own private chapels and meeting houses.³ As these groups of hyperspiritual folk became more formally organized, they called themselves "*Ansgar Societies*," for as St. Ansgar brought Christianity to the land of the Vikings in the early Middle Ages, so they would revive true religion among their countrymen.⁴ Within the Ansgar Societies there was a common imperative concern for what was called "the Christian Mission," which meant, first of all, a zeal for soul winning, and secondly, Christian service and charity. It was this interest and concern which earned for the hyperevangelicals the name "Mission Friends."⁵

³ See article by "E. F. S." in *Budbäraren*, December, 1869, pp. 205ff. Regarding the practice of separate communion "E. F. S." declares, "Det synes oss, som skulle de bröder hvilka afhålla sig från att gå till nattvarden inom statskyrkan, göra sådant isynnerhet af två skäl. Det första är att de tycka sig böra emottaga sakramentet af en trogen läsare, det andra, att de icke anse det rätt att taga det tillsammans med den stora otrogna hopen," pp. 205-206.

⁴ N. J. Nordström, *De frikyrkliga och statskyrkoproblemet*, Stockholm, 1922, pp. 13, 16, 40. David Nyvall, *The Swedish Covenanters*, Chicago, 1930, pp. 20-35.

⁵ David Nyvall and Karl A. Olsson, *The Evangelical Covenant Church*, Chicago, 1954, p. 39f.

When these "Mission Friends" came to America in the period between 1860-1880, they usually associated themselves with Augustana congregations, because here they could hear Swedish sermons, sing the beloved hymns and spiritual songs, and even participate in the well-known Swedish liturgy. But they were not happy with the Augustana Synod. It was not the sermons, nor the singing, nor even the liturgy to which they objected. They objected to what they felt was Augustana's preoccupation with its own institutional life and a lack of actual zeal for the conversion of the unsaved, and also what they felt was the state-church admixture of "spiritual" and "worldly" elements in Augustana congregations. Augustana did not seem to be really prepared to administer the kind of church discipline (*kyrkotukt*) which would separate the chaff from the grain. Indeed, these hyper-evangelicals saw in the Augustana Synod little more than an extension of the Church of Sweden with few of its virtues and many of its faults.⁶

It was with these "Mission Friends" that Carl August Björk had identified himself, and it was with this outlook and spirit that he joined the Augustana congregation at Swede Bend, Iowa, in 1864, and thus became a member of the flock of the former cobbler and lay-preacher, Pastor Magnus Håkanson. Pastor Håkanson's field of labor covered a very wide area, and therefore it was not possible for him to visit Swede Bend every week. Thus, when he heard that the newly arrived Björk was conducting devotional services in the homes of the people of Swede Bend, he was pleased and, recalling the early days in New Sweden when he, the town cobbler and lay preacher, had tried to minister to his friends and neighbors, he encouraged Björk to continue the good work.⁷ For almost three years Björk ministered as a lay preacher to his countrymen in Swede Bend with the good will and encouragement of Pastor Håkanson. It is said that at these devotional sessions Björk would read a sermon from the pages of *Pietisten*, the monthly publication of Rosenius. On Good Friday, 1867, however, as Björk was making preparations for a meeting with his neighbors, one of his friends hid the copy of *Pietisten* from which Björk intended to read that day, in the hope that Björk would preach a "regular sermon." He rose to the occasion and preached extemporaneously with such effectiveness that after the service the congregation decided

⁶ A. P. Nelson, *Svenska Missionsvännernas i Amerika Historia*, Första Delen, Minneapolis, 1906, p. 19f.

⁷ C. V. Bowman, *Missionsvännerna i Amerika, en återblick på deras uppkomst och första verksamhetstid*, Minneapolis, 1907, p. 31f.

that henceforth Björk was to preach to them instead of reading an article for their edification. Björk acceded to this request and proved to be such an effective preacher that the parish experienced a mild revival. Within three years of his arrival in Iowa, Björk found himself at the center of a religious circle which looked to him for leadership, inspiration, and spiritual counsel. Thus, in this quiet and unspectacular way, without resort to theological training or ecclesiastical ordination, the career of the first "Mission Friend" preacher in America was launched.⁸

If Håkanson or someone with similar sympathies had continued to serve Swede Bend, the result of Björk's ministry might have turned out differently than it did. As it was, Håkanson concluded his ministry in Swede Bend early in 1867, and was succeeded by C. J. Malmberg, who first visited the parish as a theological student during the summer of 1866, and following his ordination in 1867 was called as the regular pastor to the Swede Bend parish.⁹ It seems that Malmberg had an altogether different attitude than Håkanson toward Björk and the Mission Friends. In Malmberg's opinion they represented a dangerous and schismatic influence, and to counteract such tendencies Malmberg conducted a series of lectures on Lutheran orthodoxy in the course of which hyperevangelicalism was branded as a delusion and a heresy. When these measures failed to turn Björk and his followers from their errors, Malmberg imported several Augustana pastors who helped him conduct a "consultation" with the Mission Friends.¹⁰ Far from reaching an agreement, both sides discovered that the cleavage between them was widening. In the meantime, on July 4, 1868,¹¹ the Björk faction formed the "Mission Society" of Swede Bend with the hope and intention that this free society would serve to revive the Augustana congregation much as the Rosenians in Sweden were enlivening the congregations of the Church of Sweden.¹² Björk and his friends did not intend to separate from the Augustana Church; they only wanted to revive, reform, and spiritualize it in accordance with their own image of a true church.¹³ However,

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁹ *Protokall*, Augustana Synod, 1867, Ministerii-Förhandlingar, p. 32.

¹⁰ Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

¹¹ It was undoubtedly more than a mere coincidence that the Mission Friends chose Independence Day as the occasion for their own declaration of independence.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹³ Axel Anderson, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 10ff. A characteristic attitude toward Augustana on the part of the early Mission Friends was well expressed by Karl Johan Nyvall in *Min faders testamente. En levnadsteckning av predikanten och frikyrkomannen Karl Johan Nyvall*, Chicago, 1924, pp. 311ff.

the formation of an independent "Mission Society" proved to be a long step toward the eventual establishment of an independent congregation.¹⁴

Thus it was at Swede Bend, Iowa, under the leadership of C. A. Björk that the hyperevangelical spirit of Swedish nonconformity first emerged as a distinct and independent movement among Swedish Lutherans in America. From Swede Bend the movement spread to other Iowa communities, as Björk was joined by other like-minded men, including Hans Blom, John Peterson, and A. W. Hedenchoug, in promoting the cause and forming "Mission Societies," and eventually independent congregations, in Des Moines, Sioux City, and Swede Point, later called Madrid.¹⁵

The situation in Iowa was by no means unique. This may be deduced from the fact that about the same time as the Mission Society in Swede Bend was emerging, similar groups were taking shape elsewhere, and for approximately the same reasons. In Galesburg, Illinois, the First Lutheran Church, served for many years by T. N. Hasselquist, was composed of several strains of Swedish immigrants, including free-church evangelicals.¹⁶ Hasselquist had found it expedient during his pastorate in Galesburg to make concessions to this element in his unconventional and somewhat casual use of liturgical and other traditional church forms and practices.¹⁷ Hasselquist's successor in Galesburg, Pastor A. W. Dahlsten, was of a different temperament. He had neither time nor inclination to cater to the idiosyncracies of one group or another, and conducted his ministry along traditional, conservative lines. At public worship he preached a conservative Lutheran theology, used the full Swedish liturgy in accordance with the official rubrics, and dressed in the usual garb of the Swedish clergyman.¹⁸ Such clerical leadership was much too staid for the hyperevangelicals, and before long there were rumblings of discontent among them. Dahlsten tried to meet his opponents with arguments, warnings, and admonitions, but without success. The leading spirit of the opposition seems to have been a layman, who later became a "mission preacher," S. W. Sundberg, who gathered the discontented members of Pastor Dahlsten's flock together for special devotional

¹⁴ Nyvall and Olsson, *op. cit.*, Chapter IV, pp. 39-55.

¹⁵ C. V. Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-47.

¹⁶ E. W. Olson, A. Schön and M. J. Engberg, *History of the Swedes of Illinois*, Chicago, 1908, pp. 593ff.

¹⁷ Ander, *Hasselquist, op. cit.*, pp. 161-166.

¹⁸ Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 94ff.

services in their homes.¹⁹ It was Sundberg and his friends who persuaded the First Lutheran congregation in Galesburg to address the following communication to the Synodical convention at Carver, Minnesota, June 11-17, 1868:

1. Whereas this congregation, on a number of occasions, has considered what reasons there might be for the exclusion of its delegates from certain synodical sessions, a circumstance which has caused great dissatisfaction, anxiety and sorrow, therefore, we demand that our delegate be permitted to participate in all sessions of the synod and ministerium.

2. And the congregation also makes known that no preacher will be permitted to appear among us with any kind of special ministerial vestments or ceremonies, since all such things are destructive, causing trouble and grief of conscience. We are therefore content simply to hear God's Word.²⁰

To this communication the Augustana Synod made the following reply:

1. It is not true that any delegate has been excluded from synodical sessions. The reason for restricting the sessions of the ministerium to the clergy was given two years ago to the delegate from Galesburg, as well as to delegates from other congregations, and is simply this that, since the ministerium has the grave responsibility of examining and ordaining ministerial candidates, it is sometimes necessary to investigate such intimate and personal experiences and circumstances as could hardly be done in a public meeting.

2. The Synod deplores that a congregation, such as the one in Galesburg, lays such heavy emphasis upon those external matters which our confessions deem to be adiaphora and non-essential. Furthermore, the Synod is not aware that any of its Swedish pastors make use of "special ministerial vestments or ceremonies," other than those which are in general use throughout the Swedish Lutheran Church, and it expresses the hope that none of its pastors will introduce any others. In the meantime the Synod reaffirms the resolution which was adopted at the meeting in Chicago, June 26, 1863, as follows:

1. That the attention of our pastors and congregations is directed to Article VII of the Augsburg Confession and Article X of the Formula of Concord as constituting a correct confessional interpretation of Romans 14, and also Article VII of the congregational constitution which prescribes how questions like this shall be handled.

2. While the Synod will unflinchingly preserve Christian liberty in accordance with the confession of the Lutheran Church which corresponds with God's Word, it is nevertheless of the opinion that common usage in church practice and ceremonies

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

²⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1868, p. 44.

is beneficial, and it does not approve the tendency to discard the usages inherited from the fathers in favor of new practices derived from Reformed sources; therefore the Synod desires that the principles here expressed shall be carefully observed, and that no unnecessary innovations be thoughtlessly brought in, realizing that though the right to do many things does indeed exist, not everything serves for improvement.²¹

The official minutes of the synodical convention conclude this part of the record with the following interesting entry:

Resolved that the president of synod and the secretary be requested to visit the congregation in Galesburg at the earliest possible opportunity and call their attention to the viewpoint of the Synod in these matters. When this resolution was being considered a lively discussion arose during which several delegates seriously expressed their censure regarding the present spirit of laxity which will discard and repudiate everything which belongs to good church order.²²

This exchange between the Galesburg dissenters and the Augustana Synod is interesting, since it throws some light upon the basic attitudes of each group. The protest from Galesburg, accusing the Synod, for example, of excluding delegates from certain synodical sessions was aimed at the practice of limiting the sessions of the ministerium to pastors only. This practice was interpreted by the hyperevangelicals as an unscriptural, indeed, a papally inspired distinction between clergy and laity. They insisted that a true preacher and interpreter of God's Word, like the prophets of Israel, is not manufactured by ecclesiastical machinery, such as a theological seminary and synodical ordination, but is motivated and illumined by the mysterious yet powerful indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God who gives to whom He will the wisdom and insight of the prophet of God. Such a man needs neither the credentials of the theological seminary nor the ornate vestments of a pretentious ecclesiastical office, for his credential is the truth and his vestment the humility and integrity of a servant who has been redeemed by grace and commissioned by divine power and love.²³

Thus the protest against limitation of representation at meetings of the ministerium as well as the declaration against clerical vestments was an action designed to test the Synod regarding its attitude toward

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, p. 44f. The second sentence is a comment by the secretary.

²³ For the Swedish background of this viewpoint see Allan Sandewall, *Separatism i Övre Norrland, 1820-1855*, Uppsala, 1952, pp. 254ff. See also Martin Gidlund, *Kyrka och väckelse inom Härnösands stift från 1840-talet till omkring 1880*, Uppsala, 1955, pp. 184ff.

the lay ministry. It also sought to force the Synod to recognize and acknowledge the complete legitimacy of the kind of lay ministry which the evangelical movement had developed in Sweden and to which the hyperevangelicals in this country were committed.

The responding resolution of Synod made it quite clear that the Church had no intention of yielding to the nonconformists and deplored the attitude of the Galesburg congregation. Furthermore, by reaffirming its previous action of 1863, the Synod assumed a negative position toward all anticlericalism and stamped its approval upon the traditional usages inherited from the Church of Sweden. This served to clear the air; henceforth there need be no doubt where at least a part of the line of cleavage lay between the hyperevangelicals and the Augustana Synod.

In his annual report to the Synod, 1869, President Hasselquist informed his hearers that in accordance with the Synod's instructions he had visited the Galesburg congregation and notified the people there regarding the Synod's action and viewpoint. But instead of healing the breach, an open break had occurred, with the dissenters leaving the First Lutheran Church and forming their own *Second Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Calling Charles Anderson, a Danish pastor, to serve them, they affiliated with the Synod of Northern Illinois, and thus with the General Synod. Hasselquist warned against the danger of proselytism by the General Synod and declared,

When the pastor of the separatist congregation in Galesburg, C. Anderson, upon instructions from the General Synod, now seeks to visit our settlements and congregations, we all know who he is and whose errands he runs. We shall therefore be prepared to meet even this enemy of our Synod and are persuaded that the Lord will preserve His truth among us.²⁴

While the leaven of hyperevangelicalism was making headway in Iowa and Galesburg, it was also permeating the Swedish community in Chicago. Indeed, Chicago soon became the most important center of the movement in America, and the Immanuel Lutheran Church was the matrix from which it developed. The Immanuel Church, of which Erland Carlsson was pastor, was composed of about the same variety of Swedish immigrants as those in the Galesburg congregation, including a number of hyperevangelical Mission Friends. In 1865 a mission society was formed in the Immanuel church under Carlsson's leadership, but since the membership was not limited exclusively to

²⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1869, p. 6f. See also Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 97ff. Norelius, I, *op. cit.*, p. 236f.

"pure Christians," it did not satisfy the hyperevangelicals. This element continued to lay plans for a "genuine" mission society composed only of "truly spiritually minded people." These plans were not realized, however, until 1868, when a colporteur from Sweden, J. M. Sanngren, came to Chicago and quickly became the leader of the Mission Friends in the Immanuel Church. Although Carlsson maintained cordial relationships with Sanngren, hoping to keep the dissenters within the fold of the Immanuel Church, the Mission Friends were determined to form a new mission society of "spiritually minded believers." Accordingly, on December 26, 1868, in the home of Martin Sundin, the *Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Missionary Association of Chicago* was organized with J. M. Sanngren as its spiritual advisor.²⁵

There seems to have been no thought, as yet, of separating from the Immanuel congregation. Sanngren was often invited by Pastor Carlsson to preach and conduct the morning and evening worship in the Immanuel Church, and the Association was careful to arrange its sessions so that there would be no conflict with worship services or other scheduled meetings in the Immanuel congregation.²⁶ Erland Carlsson, however, feared that increased independence would lead to eventual separation, and he must have had mixed emotions as he participated, January 25, 1869, in the dedication of the Mission chapel which Sanngren and his followers had built on North Franklin Street.²⁷ In order to reach the vast immigrant masses in and around Chicago, the Mission Society engaged C. J. Lindahl, brother of the outstanding Augustana leader S. P. A. Lindahl, as a city missionary to work together with Pastor Carlsson and the staff of the Immanuel Church in the great task of bringing the immigrants into relationship with the church. Personal differences, however, between Carlsson and Lindahl soon ended the relationship.²⁸

In July, 1869, the first general assembly of Mission Societies was held in the Immanuel Church in Chicago. In attendance were delegates from societies in Iowa and Illinois, as well as several Augustana pastors, including Erland Carlsson, G. Peters, A. Huet, and others. Such mission leaders as C. A. Björk from Swede Bend, Iowa, P. Undeen from Rockford, J. Peterson from Geneseo, as well as J. M. Sanngren, had charge of the proceedings. Discussions were conducted about various

²⁵ A detailed account of the work in Chicago is given in Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-74. See also Axel Anderson, II, *op. cit.*, pp. 14ff.

²⁶ Axel Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 15f. See also Nyvall and Olsson, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

²⁷ Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

theological questions and practical tasks of Christian mission. In the course of these discussions an Augustana pastor is said to have submitted the following question for discussion, "Since among our Swedish people we have both churches and pastors, and the gospel is proclaimed in the spoken and written word, why do you therefore seek to prove the necessity of a distinctive mission organization?" As a counterthrust, a second question was suggested by a Mission Friend, "What is the cause of the spiritual decadence which prevails among our Swedish people, in spite of the fact that we have both churches and pastors?" Such questions indicate the tension which existed between the Augustana clergy and the hyperevangelicals.²⁹ As these questions were discussed the tension mounted, and the criticism and censure on each side against the other served only to increase the sense of alienation. Erland Carlsson, as the spokesman for the Augustana clergy, addressed a warning to the assembly, declaring that if the Mission Association sent men into the field who would level irresponsible criticism against the church, the doors of the Augustana churches would soon be closed to all Association representatives.³⁰

Meanwhile, the increasing activities of the Mission Friends and the outspoken anti-Augustana bias of some of their spokesmen was being noted in *Hemlandet* and especially in *Augustana*, the latter journal having been launched in 1868 for the primary purpose of being a polemical instrument to defend the Augustana Synod against its detractors.³¹ Hasselquist, editor of *Augustana*, was particularly suspicious of the motivations and loyalty of the Mission Friends, and seriously questioned their legal right to send out evangelists and colporteurs to work among the Swedish immigrants. To meet the charge of being an illegal company with no right to engage in religious work, a special business meeting was held by the Chicago Mission Association on January 11, 1870, during which the Association was reorganized into *The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Church of Chicago* and legally incorporated under the laws of the state of Illinois as a religious institution entitled to engage in religious activity, including the licensing of its agents.³² By this action the act of separation was effected and the Mission Friend movement in Chicago was now expressed and embodied in an independent institution. This congregation quickly

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

³¹ Cf. Ander, *op. cit.*, pp. 162ff. Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

³² Axel Andersson, *op. cit.*, p. 16. *Diamond Jubilee Album*, First Mission Covenant Church of Chicago, edited by Joseph C. Danielson, Chicago, 1944, p. 7.

took a commanding position of leadership among the Mission Friends in America, and assumed the responsibility of issuing clerical license to the mission preachers and evangelists who were found to be acceptable.

Though such licensed preachers could now legally discharge the duties which properly belong to the clergy, it was not long before the question arose whether such legal license met the biblical requirements for investment into the ministerial office. After a good deal of discussion and study the leaders concluded that, according to biblical precedent, the ministerial office could be bestowed only by the laying on of hands by someone who already possessed the office.³³ To meet this emergency the Mission Friends, many of whom had on previous occasions spoken disparagingly of the need for ecclesiastical ordination, now turned for help to Pastor Charles Anderson. He was the only ordained pastor up to 1870 serving Swedish Lutheran congregations outside the Augustana Synod, being the shepherd of the Second Lutheran Church in Galesburg and a member of the Synod of Northern Illinois.³⁴ Through Anderson, the Synod of Northern Illinois was requested to grant ordination to J. M. Sanngren, in order that he in turn might ordain others into the ministry of the Mission Friends. To this request the Synod of Northern Illinois acceded, authorizing the ordination of Sanngren in his own mission chapel in Chicago by a committee appointed by the president of the Synod. Thus, in the fall of 1870, with Charles Anderson acting as the officiating minister, Sanngren was ordained, the first preacher among the Mission Friends in America to be thus consecrated.³⁵ Some time later Sanngren consecrated C. A. Björk, and thus the Mission Friends settled the question of "apostolic succession" and instituted their own independent ministerium.

The establishment of an independent, legally incorporated Mission congregation in Chicago gave the Mission Friend movement in the

³³ C. V. Bowman, *The Mission Covenant of America*, Chicago, 1925, p. 47.

³⁴ Charles Anderson, though Danish by birth, was thoroughly Americanized, and was employed for a number of years by the General Synod to do missionary work among the Swedes, in an endeavor to win as many Swedish Lutheran congregations as possible for the General Synod. Thus, Anderson was looked upon as a dangerous enemy by Augustana leaders.

³⁵ It has not been possible to establish an exact date for this ordination service. According to information given the writer by the archivist at North Park College, Chicago, Illinois, the original records of this meeting have been lost. Sanngren's ordination was very unusual, since he was not being received into the ministerium of the Synod of Northern Illinois, and therefore not subject to its discipline. This was interpreted by Augustana as proof of the proselyting intentions of the Synod of Northern Illinois.

United States a center which quickly became the chief base of operations for the promotion of unity, organization, and publicity among the scattered groups of Swedish hyperevangelicals. It was to Chicago that other Mission Friends looked for leadership.³⁶ Meanwhile, Pastor Charles Anderson of Galesburg rendered the movement a significant service by launching a new Swedish newspaper, *Sions baner*, in July, 1871, devoted to the defense and promotion of free church evangelicalism.³⁷ This newspaper was subsidized by the General Synod and was published for the purpose of winning as many Mission Friends as possible for the Synod of Northern Illinois and the General Synod.³⁸ It was, therefore, a sharp critic of the Augustana Synod and a warm advocate of greater unity among all mission societies. Although Anderson's stubborn insistence on affiliating the Mission Friends with the General Synod eventually alienated him from the movement, he and his newspaper exerted in the early stages a widespread influence among Swedish immigrants on behalf of the Mission Friends.³⁹

The encouraging impulses which emanated from the mission center in Chicago, aided and abetted by the publicity provided by *Sions baner*, did much to promote the emergence of mission societies elsewhere among the Swedes. Thus, mission associations were organized in Rockford, Princeton, Altona, Geneseo, Lockport, Joliet, Batavia, and Moline, Illinois; in Lindsborg, Salina, McPherson, Topeka, and Osage City, Kansas; in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Red Wing, Cannon Falls, Spring Garden, Lake City, Dassel, Isanti, and Waseca, Minnesota.⁴⁰ In the eastern sections of the country similar societies began to spring up in New York City, Brooklyn, and Jamestown, New York; Campello, Worcester, and Boston, Massachusetts; Providence, Rhode Island; New Haven, Connecticut, and even as far north as New Sweden, Maine.⁴¹

Although these societies of Mission Friends professed to be Lutheran in all essentials except their "perfectionist" conception of the church, their rapid growth and frequent criticism of the growing "institutionalism," "formalism" and "ecclesiastical authority" of the Augustana Synod aroused both the fear and the wrath of Hasselquist and other Augustana leaders. To the Augustana men the Mission Friends no longer represented the kind of wholesome nonconformity

³⁶ Bowman, *The Mission Covenant*, op. cit., p. 43f.

³⁷ Bowman, *Missionsvännerna i Amerika*, op. cit., p. 105f.

³⁸ Bowman, *The Mission Covenant*, op. cit., p. 63.

³⁹ Bowman, *Missionsvännerna i Amerika*, op. cit., p. 106f. See also Stephenson, op. cit., p. 271f.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-133.

⁴¹ A. P. Nelson, op. cit., pp. 30-67.

which was characteristic of Swedish Rosenianism; these people in America were talking and acting like sectarians and schismatics. Thus Hasselquist felt impelled to thunder at them in his annual report to the Synod in 1868,

It cannot be denied that we have conclusive evidence these days of belonging to an embattled fellowship. It almost seems that never since the formation of our Synod, or even since the establishment of our first congregation, have we been so surrounded as we now are by enemies who unite in order to do us harm. On the one hand are the increasingly militant forces of unbelief, denial and ungodliness . . . on the other hand stands a kind of piety which in ignorance or deception would threaten us. It is well known that the great spiritual awakenings in our homeland during the last decades have not only borne much good fruit, thank God, but as is regrettably often the case, much unripe, bitter, and even poisonous fruit in the form of various sects which violently attack the Lutheran Church which because of its loyalty to its confessions and order blocks their way . . . some spiritual leaders, who have sought to further their own ambitions, welfare and opinions . . . are reported as having their countrymen in America in mind, hoping to find a more fertile soil in this land of freedom and sectarianism.⁴²

With the Augustana leaders taking an increasingly negative attitude toward the whole Mission Friend movement, it was inevitable that a similar sentiment would eventually arise among the rank and file of Augustana clergy. And so, indeed, it did. Augustana pulpits were denied to spokesmen for the Mission Friends, doors of Augustana churches were closed to their meetings, and those who ventured to distribute mission tracts and papers were often disciplined and sometimes expelled from membership.⁴³ This was a regrettable attitude on the part of Augustana, since such rigid and negative reactions served only to crystallize the opposition, aggravate the tensions, and hasten the decision of local mission societies to separate from further connection with Augustana, and to establish themselves as independent, free congregations. Thus, by a gradual process of alienation the dissenting elements among the evangelical Swedes became separatist.⁴⁴

In order to achieve some semblance of unity among the separatist

⁴² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1868, p. 6f.

⁴³ Cf. Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 274f.

⁴⁴ Halmar Sundquist, "The Mission Covenanters," *Covenant Memories, Golden Jubilee Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant, 1885-1935*, Chicago, 1935, p. 54. See also *Minnesskrift publicerad med anledning af svenska evangeliska missionförbundets i Amerika tjugufemårsjubileum i Chicago, 1885-1910*, Minneapolis, 1910, p. 16.

congregations, the Chicago congregation called a conference of Mission Friends to meet at Keokuk, Iowa, May, 1873, to discuss the feasibility of forming a national association. At this conference it became obvious that the Mission Friends were not all of the same mind. One group, headed by Charles Anderson of Galesburg, held that the mission congregations should unite to form a district synod of the General Synod. From the point of view of church polity, this group represented the conservative element among the Mission Friends. At the opposite end were the outright congregationalists, who were opposed to any kind of federation of congregations, and believed that ecclesiastical organization was wrong in principle and inimical to spiritual life in practice. Between these two extremes was a third party to which the majority at Keokuk belonged. This group believed that some sort of federation should be formed, but that it should be entirely free, independent, and unaffiliated with any other group.⁴⁵

In the discussions and the voting at Keokuk, the majority "middle" party carried the day, and succeeded in pushing through the necessary legislation to organize *The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod of America*, incorporated under the laws of Iowa, and committed to the following confessional affirmations, (1) The Word of God is the only infallible rule of faith and conduct, (2) For the purpose of interpretation the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian creeds, are accepted, together with the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.⁴⁶ It is important to note at this point that at this meeting in Keokuk the Mission Synod looked upon itself as a Swedish Lutheran association, committed to nearly the same confessional position as Augustana, and differing primarily in the area of polity rather than theology.

The Anderson faction which was defeated at Keokuk did not, however, cease its activities. Just a year later, May, 1874, these conservative Mission Friends met in Galesburg, Illinois, and founded the *Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Ansgarius Synod in the United States*, adopting a constitution almost identical to that of the Mission Synod, except that the Ansgarians decided to affiliate with the General Synod.⁴⁷ The primary motivation for the formation of the Ansgarius Synod was the need for co-operation and the support of a small Mission school which Charles Anderson had established at Keokuk

⁴⁵ Nyvall and Olsson, *op. cit.*, p. 44f. Bowman, *Missionsvännerna i Amerika*, *op. cit.*, pp. 137ff. Axel Andersson, *op. cit.*, pp. 20ff.

⁴⁶ For the complete text of the constitution of the Mission Synod see Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 141ff.

⁴⁷ Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 236f. Andersson, *op. cit.*, pp. 23ff.

in 1873, known as the *Ansgarius Mission Institute*, which two years later was moved to Knoxville, Illinois, and the name changed to *The Swedish American Ansgarius College*.⁴⁸

In the meantime the third segment of Mission Friends, the congregationalists, did not feel at home with either of the two existing Mission synods, and continued to campaign for a strictly congregationalist polity among Mission Friends, permitting each local congregation complete autonomy, with merely a steering committee to coordinate the tasks which might need common endeavor. This branch of Swedish dissent was concentrated largely in the eastern states, while the supporters of the Mission and Ansgarius Synods were centered for the most part in the Midwest.⁴⁹ It was the chief spokesman of the congregationalist Mission Friends, J. G. Princell, who may be said to have been the man who led the Mission Friends out of the Lutheran household in America.

The Waldenström Controversy

For the last several years of his ministry Carl Olof Rosenius, the outstanding spiritual leader of the Swedish nation, had as one of his closest associates, a brilliant young preacher, scholar, writer, and evangelist, Paul Peter Waldenström. Born in the Norrland village of Luleå, in 1838, Waldenström was raised in an environment which was deeply affected by the evangelical revivals of his day. He graduated from the university with honors, and was ordained into the ministerium of the Church of Sweden, although he identified himself with the revival movement which was critical of the Church of Sweden.⁵⁰ During his years of association with Rosenius, Waldenström was known as a pietistic, though conservative and orthodox, Lutheran. This reputation led the Augustana Synod in 1862, upon the recommendation of L. P. Esbjörn and friends in Sweden, to extend a call to Waldenström to come to America and succeed Esbjörn as the theo-

⁴⁸ Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 226ff.

⁴⁹ The best study of the congregational branch of the Mission Friend movement in America is A. P. Nelson, *Svenska Missionsvännernas i Amerika Historia*, Minneapolis, Minn., 1906. For the above discussion see especially pages 9-67.

⁵⁰ The most definitive work on the life and theology of Waldenström is the study by William Bredberg, *P. P. Waldenströms verksamhet till 1878*, Stockholm, 1948. This work was a doctoral dissertation presented at Uppsala University by the man who has been the president of the Covenant Theological Seminary in Lidingö for a number of years. Another excellent biography of Waldenström is N. P. Ollén, *Paul Peter Waldenström: En levandsteckning*, Uppsala, 1927.

logical professor at Augustana Seminary.⁵¹ Regarding this call, Waldenström at a later day had this to say:

It was in May, 1862, that I received the call, signed by Hasselquist, president of the Augustana Synod. From Professor Esbjörn, who had the call with him to Sweden, when he was on a visit, I had a couple of letters in which he strongly urged that I accept the call. C. O. Rosenius, in whom I had great confidence, also urged me to accept. But when I told my father about the matter he became very sad. Just a few months previously he had lost his wife, my own beloved mother, and it had deeply depressed him. He concluded his letter to me with these words: "My strength is now broken; life is cheerless and heavy. The only happiness I have left as a reward for my sacrifices on their behalf is the comfort of my children. To be disappointed in this hope would certainly prostrate your tired but loving father." This settled the matter.⁵²

Having determined to cast his lot as a pastor in Sweden rather than as an immigrant professor in America, Waldenström threw himself into the work of evangelizing his homeland with gusto and energy, traveling up and down the land preaching, lecturing, and exhorting. In 1882 he authored a sensational little book entitled "Squire Adamsson, or Where Do You Live?"⁵³ The book was a kind of abbreviated Swedish version of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, telling in allegorical form the story of the spiritual pilgrimage of Squire Adamsson. Adamsson is introduced as a well-educated, prosperous, deeply religious business man, who has founded and endowed a missionary society for work among the heathen, and in many other ways is active in the work of the church. In every outward respect he is a pillar in his community and highly esteemed as a model Christian citizen and gentleman. Then one day a messenger named Moses arrives at the Squire's door with a summons from the noble Justus Almighty to pay a long-standing note of 10,000 pounds, and when the Squire is unable to raise the cash he is summarily thrown into debtor's prison. There he languishes in shame and despair, until one day he is told that his entire indebtedness has been paid by Immanuel Davidsson, son of

⁵¹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1861, p. 30; Minutes, Board of Directors, Augustana Seminary, July 17, December 18, 1861, December 10, 1862. A copy of the call to Waldenström is preserved in Augustana Archives, Rock Island, Ill.

⁵² P. Waldenström, *Nya färder i Amerikas Förenta Stater*, Stockholm, 1902, p. 268. Ollén, *op. cit.*, p. 4f.

⁵³ *Brukspatron Adamsson eller hvar bor du?* Stockholm, 1864. This book first appeared as a series of articles in *Stads-Missionären*, Stockholm, beginning Saturday, October 4, 1862, and running through the issue of November 22, 1862.

Justus Almight. From prison, Adamsson is taken to the beautiful city of Forgiveness, where his name is changed to Abrahamson, and as a new man with a new name the Squire continues his pilgrimage through various perils and places until finally Immanuel Davidsson sends his servant, Death, to bring the Squire at last to Mount Holiness. Every Swede seemed to see himself in the person of the Squire, and both the book and the author became the talk of the nation.⁵⁴

After the death of Rosenius in 1868, Waldenström became the principal leader of the evangelical movement in Sweden, assuming among his many other duties the editorship of the journal *Pietisten*. For the first few years he gave every evidence of faithfully following in the footsteps of his revered predecessor, with no hint of developing a viewpoint foreign to that of Rosenius.⁵⁵ Then without previous warning, there appeared in the issue of September, 1872, of *Pietisten*, a sermon from the pen of Waldenström for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity which exploded like a bombshell in Sweden.⁵⁶ In this sermon Waldenström set forth a theory of the atonement which was sharply at variance with the orthodox position of the Lutheran Church, and foreign to the piety and theology of Rosenius.⁵⁷ The text for the sermon was Matthew 13:44-46, the parable of Jesus in which the kingdom of God is compared to a treasure hid in the field and a pearl of great price. In discussing this parable Waldenström propounded his new conception of the atonement in five brief theses:

1. That man's fall into sin has occasioned no change in the disposition of God.
2. That it was not God's wrath or vindictiveness toward man after his fall that blocked the way of salvation.
3. That the change wrought by the fall into sin occurred only in man, in the sense that man became sinful, and therefore separated from God.
4. That man therefore needed reconciliation but not for the purpose of propitiating God so as to render Him merciful, but to blot out and take away man's sin so as to render him righteous again.
5. That Jesus Christ has accomplished this reconciliation.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Ernest Newman, *Den waldenströmska försoningsläran i historisk belysning*, Stockholm, 1932, pp. 165ff. See also Bredberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 123ff. Ollén, *op. cit.*, pp. 79ff. The study by Newman is an excellent analysis of the historical antecedents of Waldenström's theology.

⁵⁵ Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

⁵⁶ *Pietisten*, September, 1872, Vol. 31, pp. 370ff.

⁵⁷ Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

⁵⁸ *Pietisten*, *op. cit.*, p. 370. See also Eskil Levander, *Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen genom 75 år*, 2 vols., Stockholm, 1931, I, p. 100f.

The theology intrinsic to this viewpoint differs from historic Lutheranism at several points. It is new and different first in its concept of God. Whereas the Lutheran confessions make a distinction between the holy and righteous justice of God and His redeeming love,⁵⁹ Waldenström rejected this distinction. For him, God is love—eternally unchanging love, and nothing else. Though man may change and go astray, God remains the same, pure and absolute love. Thus, God's love and righteousness, are, *per se*, identical. In the second place, Waldenström proposed a new and different concept of Christ as *Advocate* (ställföreträdare). Since Waldenström held that God is not angry with the sinner, he asserted that there is no need for Christ to be man's advocate before God. On the contrary, it is God who needs someone to remove man's sin, and therefore Christ becomes God's advocate to man. Waldenström puts the matter thus:

When God gave His Son, it did not involve the necessity of finding someone upon whom God could wreak His wrath and vengeance in order that He might again love the world. It involved, rather, the finding of someone through whom He could rescue man, His fallen child, whom He eternally loves because He is love. Otherwise Christ would not be the world's Savior, but God's Savior. Thus, our Lord Jesus Christ in His suffering and death was not *our* Advocate to take away the wrath of God, but God's Advocate to take away our sin . . . In His exaltation He is indeed our Advocate and our righteousness with the Father.⁶⁰

In the third place Waldenström's viewpoint involves a redefinition of the act of atonement itself. Historic Lutheranism, and particularly the Lutheran theology of nineteenth-century Sweden, leaned heavily in the direction of the Anselmic idea of satisfaction, which points the act of atonement toward both God and man, and in relation to man maintains the objective character of the Christ-deed by emphasizing its forensic nature. In Waldenström's theology this is practically swept aside, as he limits the effect of the atonement to the subjective human experience, the removal of man's guilt and the transformation of his disposition toward God.⁶¹

When Waldenström was asked to set forth the essential difference

⁵⁹ See *Augsburg Confession*, Article XX; *Apology*, Chapter II, Article IV, Chapter III, Article VI; *Smalkald Articles*, Part III, Article XIII; *Large Catechism*, Part I, The Ten Commandments; *Formula of Concord*, Chapter V, Law and Gospel.

⁶⁰ *Pietisten*, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

⁶¹ For a brief but excellent critical analysis of Waldenström's viewpoint see G. E. Beskow, *Om Förlösningens nåden med anledning af Lektor P. Waldenström's senaste skrifter*, Stockholm, 1876, especially, pp. 37-52.

between his own conception of the atonement and the traditional view of the church, he declared,

Let us picture a man who had ten sons, of whom all were lost except one. The father says to the one son remaining at his side, "My heart breaks with compassion for my lost children; go out and rescue them for me. It will cost you your own life, but that cannot be avoided." The son replies, "I will gladly obey you," and so he goes forth and gives his own life to rescue his brethren.

Now let us picture another man who has ten sons, all of whom are lost except one. To the one son remaining at his side he says, "I earnestly desire the salvation of my lost sons, but I have been dishonored and my righteousness violated. This must be restored. Therefore, I will punish you to the extent that the sin of your brethren deserves, in order that they thereby might be saved." Thereupon, the Father punishes his obedient son as much as the sins of his wayward sons deserve. And now he declares to his straying sons, "Now the doors of my home are open to you, for your brother has suffered the punishment you deserved."⁶²

Waldenström claimed to base his new theology on a very simple principle, namely the question, "Where is it written?" "What does Scripture say?" This question was predicated, of course, on the presupposition that Scripture constitutes the only infallible divine revelation and that it must, therefore, be the sole touchstone for every teaching and doctrine. Waldenström confessed his own astonishment when he first claimed to have discovered that the traditional orthodox Lutheran doctrine of the atonement was untenable because it had no Scriptural basis when examined in the light of the question, "Where is it written?"⁶³

Three years later, in 1875, Waldenström exploded another theological bomb. An Uppsala student, Erik Rosengren, wrote him a letter, pointing out that he could find no Scriptural warrant for the doctrine that since the atonement had been accomplished once and for all in the death of Christ, the condemned souls in hell were there with their sins forgiven, but as a punishment for not having believed the gospel and accepted forgiveness. "Where is it written?" asked Rosengren. Acting upon his own principle of testing every doctrine by Scripture proof, Waldenström began an intensive study of the Bible, asking himself, "Dear God and Father, what if not even this is true?" And, according to his own testimony, as he searched he reluctantly was forced to conclude that not a single statement in Scripture spoke

⁶² Ollén, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁶³ Ollén, *op. cit.*, p. 62f.

of the atonement as something once for all accomplished, but everywhere as an appeal to the faith and will of man. On the cross neither God nor man was atoned, indeed, the cross was no atoning deed, and the only connection between the cross and atonement is the faith in God's love and mercy which the cross evokes in the heart of man, on the basis of which man is forgiven.⁶⁴ It seemed to Waldenström that in biblical usage, the concept of *atonement* means *purification*, and is therefore inappropriate with respect to God, and inaccurate when applied to unbelievers.⁶⁵

It is evident that Waldenström was being pushed by his own oversimplified exegetical principle in directions which he never intended or desired to go. To insist that every theological question must be settled by the simple expedient of asking, "Where is it written?" meant that the historical development of understanding and perspective, the growth of maturity and perception, all must be shoved aside in favor of a grammatico-philological literalism which, even though conscientiously applied, could not get rid of such ambiguities in Scripture as Romans 8:3, Galatians 3:13, and Hebrews 9:12. To let Scripture alone decide theological issues was not as simple as it sounded, and to ask, "Where is it written?" did not always give unequivocal answers.⁶⁶

Meanwhile Waldenström was becoming increasingly critical of the Church of Sweden, saying that the new life which the evangelical revivals and his own new theology had awakened among the Swedish people could not be contained in the dead and outmoded forms of the State Church, but must find new modes and forms of expression which were better fitted to the new and vital religious impulses.⁶⁷ It is interesting to note, however, that though Waldenström had little good to say about the State Church, he still insisted that spiritual renewal must come from within the existing religious community, and that separation was not the preferred means to revitalization. Better, said he, that the people of God wait upon the guidance of God and give the Holy Spirit a chance to do his work in his own

⁶⁴ P. Waldenström, *God Is Right*, tr. J. G. Princell, Chicago, 1889, pp. 145-202. This is an English version of the famous book which Waldenström published in 1875 under the title, *Herren är from*, in which the new theology of Waldenström was set forth in terms of a devotional commentary on Psalm XXV. The section cited here comprises the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth meditations on verse 11, "Pardon mine iniquity." See also Ollén, *op. cit.*, pp. 75ff. Nyvall and Olsson, *op. cit.*, p. 33f. Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 290ff.

⁶⁵ Nyvall and Olsson, p. 33f.

⁶⁶ Cf. Bredberg, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 296f.

way, as did Luther, than rise up like the fanatics and schismatics of the Reformation era, trying to take the work of God into their own violent hands.⁶⁸

And what effect did Waldenström's new theology have in Sweden? It opened the floodgates of controversy and debate. In the universities and the cottages of peasants, in the halls of Parliament and out on the street corners, among the educated and the simple, the high and low, rich and poor, in the state church and in free-church circles, everyone seemed to be discussing Waldenström's new teachings, taking sides for or against him. The public and church press was also filled with articles pro and con, enlisting the efforts of some of the most able men of the day, including Gottfrid Billing, G. E. Beskow, P. P. Welinder, A. F. Beckman, L. L. Landgren, and Erik Nystrom. As the debate continued and the heat grew more intense, both sides were guilty of both overstatements and a lack of charity.⁶⁹

While the great religious debate was at its height in 1876-1878, the leaders of Swedish dissent held a series of institutes in Stockholm for the purpose of achieving doctrinal clarity and unity of mind within the movement and, if possible, putting an end to the nationwide dispute. The first of these institutes, convened August 15-18, 1876, in Stockholm's Bethlehem Chapel, where Rosenius once held forth, proved to be of decisive importance. Gathered for this institute and rally were representatives of virtually the entire spectrum of Swedish dissent. The program consisted mainly of a series of presentations followed by free discussion of the main questions of doctrinal disagreement, including the doctrine of the atonement. In the course of this convocation it became clear that two dynamic streams of religious impulse were meeting and finding each other singularly compatible. Here, on the one hand was Swedish dissent which had been growing increasingly restive in association with the Church of Sweden, but had not yet found a sufficient motivation for separation. On the other hand, Waldenström's new theology was like a voice crying in the wilderness; it was a cause searching for a standard-bearer, someone who would adopt it. Here at the institute in Stockholm, 1876, these two developments met and coalesced, each becoming identified with the other. Henceforth, that segment of Swedish dissent which had been associated with the State Church but was now rapidly moving toward separation, had a clearly articulated theology, a distinctive philosophy; it had a *ståndpunkt*, that is, a platform or viewpoint. And, though P. P.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 297f.

⁶⁹ Axel Andersson, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 42ff.

Waldenström himself was no separatist, the neoevangelicalism which he authored had now found a standard-bearer, a group mind which sought to express, embody, and propagate this viewpoint. The new theology which could not claim the national church as its home, found its anchorage here among the dissenters and gave them a new *raison d'être*.⁷⁰

Because of his "new theology" and his disregard for ecclesiastical regulations governing unauthorized celebrations of the Lord's Supper, Waldenström first lost his standing in the National Evangelical Foundation, (Fosterlandsstiftelsen) and after being rebuked by the authorities of the Church of Sweden, he resigned his ministry in the State Church.⁷¹

In the meantime, the leaders of the dissenters continued to hold their institutes. At one of these meetings in the summer of 1878, the whole question of the future relationship of the free-church movement to the national church was aired, and careful consideration given to the advisability of establishing some sort of religious activity, including missions and the training of evangelists and teachers, independent of state-church auspices and jurisdiction. The outcome of these deliberations was the formation, on August 2, 1878, in Stockholm, of the *Swedish Mission Covenant* as a separate, independent religious body in Sweden.⁷² In this act of separation P. P. Waldenström did not participate, but his theology had given the movement its platform and charter, its *ståndpunkt*. Now the movement reached out and claimed Waldenström as its most illustrious member, and he soon became its foremost teacher, spokesman, and apologist.⁷³

Waldenström's Theology Comes to America

In practically every phase of its development, the so-called "Mission-Friend movement" in America was informed and indirectly guided by the developments within the parent movement in Sweden. The hyperevangelicals in this country sought to walk in the footsteps of the trail blazers in the old country, and to do for the Christian cause in America what Rosenius and his followers were thought to have accomplished in Sweden.⁷⁴ Thus, it was almost inevitable that

⁷⁰ See Bredberg's discussion on this development, *op. cit.*, pp. 238ff.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 328f.

⁷² Axel Andersson, *op. cit.*, pp. 90ff.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-96.

⁷⁴ See Theodore W. Anderson, "Covenant Principles," in *Covenant Memories, 1885-1935*, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-15. See also David Nyvall, "Covenant Ideals," in *The Swedish Covenanters*, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-137.

what happened among the Mission Friends in Sweden would sooner or later have important repercussions among their counterparts in America.⁷⁵ When, therefore, the Swedish Covenanters not only organized themselves in 1878 into an independent Swedish denomination, but adopted the Waldenström theology as its *ståndpunkt*, as distinct from that of the Swedish Lutheran tradition, it was only a matter of time until similar developments would begin to affect the Mission Friends in America.

The individual who is said to have been the first Mission Friend in America publicly to expound the views of Waldenström was a product of the Augustana Synod and a member of its ministerium. His name was *Johann Gustav Princell*.⁷⁶ Born in Småland, 1845, Johann Gustav came to America with his parents, Magnus and Maria Gummeson, in 1856. The family lived for a while in Chicago and then settled for a number of years near Princeton, Illinois, from which place Johann Gustav took his American name.⁷⁷ During the years in Princeton the youth showed himself to be an uncommonly gifted lad, and was encouraged by his pastor and parents to prepare himself for the Lutheran ministry. Accordingly, in 1862, Johann Gustav left his parental home in Princeton and enrolled as a student at Augustana Theological Seminary in Chicago.⁷⁸ Here he became an active member of the Immanuel Lutheran congregation and a close friend and helper of Pastor Erland Carlsson. When the seminary was moved to Paxton, 1863, Princell was among the students who followed along to the new location, where he continued his studies until 1867. For the next three years Princell lived in Chicago, employed in the office of *Hemlandet*, busying himself also as the superintendent of the Immanuel Lutheran Sunday school, and as an occasional preacher when called upon by Pastor Carlsson. During this time he was called to be president of Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota,⁷⁹ but chose instead

⁷⁵ Practically all the historical narratives and biographical sketches which deal with the events and personalities involved in this episode, make reference to the close affinity which existed between the Mission Friends in Sweden and America and the consequent impact which Swedish developments therefore made upon the movement in America.

⁷⁶ David Nyvall credits Princell with this "first," declaring that he "was probably the first Mission Friend in America openly to preach the atonement taught by Waldenström." See David Nyvall, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁷⁷ The Gummeson family, who Americanized their name to Gunnerson, moved from Princeton to Paxton, 1865, and from Paxton to Assaria, Kansas in 1868.

⁷⁸ An interesting and perhaps the most complete though uncritical biographical study of Princell was written by his wife, Josephine Princell, *J. G. Princells levnadsminnen*, Chicago, 1916. The story of the early life of Princell is given in Chapter I, pp. 7-20.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

to enroll for further studies at the old University of Chicago. From 1870 to 1872 Princell studied at the Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia, preaching on week ends and during vacation periods to Swedish settlements in Philadelphia, and Campello and Boston, Massachusetts. Taking the full theological course at Philadelphia in two years, Princell graduated from the seminary in 1872, and was ordained by the Pennsylvania Synod shortly thereafter on a call to the Swedish Lutheran Gustavus Adolphus congregation in New York.⁸⁰ The Gustavus Adolphus congregation had been organized in 1865 by Pastor A. Hult, but had withdrawn from the Augustana Synod in connection with the suspension of its first resident pastor, Karl Karleen, in 1867, on charges of heresy.⁸¹ After having severed its connection with the Augustana Synod, the Gustavus Adolphus congregation petitioned the Church of Sweden to be permitted to affiliate with it. This petition was granted and from 1868 to 1872 Pastor Axel Waetter, a member of the Swedish ministerium, served the congregation. Upon his resignation and return to Sweden, the congregation issued a call to J. G. Princell to become the shepherd. Thus, though Princell joined the Augustana Synod shortly after his ordination, the congregation he served was officially connected with the Church of Sweden and, therefore, not under the jurisdiction of the Augustana Synod.⁸²

Though Princell during his years in Chicago and Philadelphia seemed to thrive best among the Mission Friends, sharing their warm-hearted spirit and piety, there is no evidence prior to 1874 that he was anything but a loyal, low-church Lutheran in spirit and practice. When, however, the books of Waldenström began to appear in America, about 1874, Princell obtained copies of these much-discussed writings, and diligently studied them with his customary eagerness.⁸³

By 1876 Princell had become a convert to the Waldenström viewpoint, and began preaching his new convictions to his people. He also organized within his congregation a fellowship of "true believers" and "pure Christians" and sent these followers as missionaries to various parts of the city to preach, teach, and distribute religious literature. For their own edification this holy group under Princell's

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 22ff.

⁸¹ Pastor Karleen is said to have left the Lutheran Church and entered the Church of Rome.

⁸² For a brief but excellent historical sketch of the Gustavus Adolphus congregation in New York see V. Berger, "Gustaf Adolfs-Församlingens Historia, 1865-1915" in anniversary edition of *Brefduvan*, Rock Island, Illinois and New York, N. Y., 1915, Augustana Archives, Rock Island.

⁸³ Josephine Princell, *op. cit.*, p. 30f.

leadership met in the homes of one another for Bible reading, prayer, and discussion.⁸⁴

With the encouragement of his band of "true believers," Princell set himself to the task of reforming the Gustavus Adolphus congregation to make it conform to the ideals of the "new theology." Thus, he sought to restrict the Lord's Supper to those who could show genuine evidence of a true conversion experience. He also endeavored to limit the membership in the church to "true Christians." The so-called *Galesburg Rule*, "Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran pastors, and Lutheran altars are for Lutheran communicants only," was much too rigid for Princell and he, therefore, disregarded it on the premise that not all Lutheran pastors are worthy to proclaim the gospel and not all Lutheran communicants are worthy to receive the Lord's Supper; nor are all non-Lutherans unworthy to preach and receive the sacrament.⁸⁵ As a result of Princell's efforts to institute his reforms, a serious controversy arose which split the Gustavus Adolphus congregation into two warring camps, those who favored Princell versus those who opposed him. Since the issues involved not only serious changes in traditional church usage and practice, but involved also grave modification of doctrine, the trouble in the Gustavus Adolphus congregation could not escape the attention of the leaders of the Augustana Synod. To be sure, the Synod had no jurisdiction over the congregation, but it did have jurisdiction over Princell as a member of the synodical ministerium.⁸⁶ Rumors of Princell's words and deeds brought the following letter from the president of the Augustana Synod,

January, 1878

H. H. Pastor J. G. Princell
New York City
Dear Brother:

At our last synodical convention I was instructed to write to you, and on account of your absence from the meeting, your neglect to ask for an excuse from said meeting and your failure to send in your annual report regarding your work, to call your attention to Chap. 1, Article 8 of the synodical constitution and bring you a fraternal reminder that you are expected to obey these regulations as long as they are in effect. Furthermore, on the basis of factual information I have received, I must kindly request you to give an explanation regarding our very confessions. It seems that you are not in agreement with the position of the

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 33ff.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 38f.

Synod on the doctrine of the atonement, nor on the question of relationships with other denominations. The viewpoint of the Synod in both of these matters has been explicitly expressed and, since an unequivocal assent to this position is a condition for synodical membership, any deviation from said position must be considered as a breach of trust. I hope that you will kindly give me your explanation of the foregoing at your very earliest opportunity.

Fraternally,
E. Norelius
President of the Augustana Synod.⁸⁷

Princell showed his contempt for synodical authority by ignoring the communication from President Norelius.⁸⁸ When, however, the Synod assembled for its annual convention in Princeton, Illinois, June 15-24, 1878, Princell was on hand. His case was brought before the ministerium by President Norelius, and Princell was asked to account for his words and deeds in writing.⁸⁹ The document which Princell handed to the ministerium on the forenoon of June 22, 1878, indicated without equivocation that he held theological views identical to those of Waldenström and at variance with the Lutheran position, and that he had sought to reform his congregation in conformity with the "new theology."⁹⁰ Upon recommendation by a special committee, appointed to give Princell's statement careful consideration and study, the ministerium voted that,

Since Pastor Princell by the spoken and written word has publicly denied the biblical and Lutheran doctrines concerning atonement and justification, but has requested time for reconsideration of his viewpoint, therefore, resolved, that Pastor J. G. Princell be suspended from the holy office of the ministry until he publicly acknowledges his errors."⁹¹

In as much as the Gustavus Adolphus congregation was not under the jurisdiction of the Synod, Princell's suspension did not of itself sever his connection as pastor of his church. But the synodical action did strengthen the hands of those in the Gustavus Adolphus congregation who were opposed to the theology and the reforms which Princell sought to impose on them. The relationship between pastor and congregation steadily deteriorated until Princell found it expedient to

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43. *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1878, p. 52.

⁸⁹ *Protokoll*, *op. cit.*, p. 52f.

⁹⁰ A copy of Princell's statement to the ministerium is given in *Ibid.*, 1878, p. 53f., and in *Princell*, *op. cit.*, p. 45f.

⁹¹ *Protokoll*, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

resign, which he did in February, 1879.⁹² As Princell withdrew from the Gustavus Adolphus congregation, and by this act also severed his connection with the Lutheran Church, he took with him a considerable number of former members of the congregation.⁹³ Within a few weeks after their withdrawal from the Lutheran fold, Princell and his followers founded the independent *Bethesda Mission Congregation*.⁹⁴

By this time, however, Princell no longer stood alone in America as the public exponent of Waldenström's "new theology." From the ranks of the Mission Friends in all sections of the land, as well as newcomers from Sweden, men stepped forward to urge the views of Waldenström. Perhaps the most effective preacher among these was E. August Skogsbergh, who had immigrated in 1876 on a call from the Chicago Mission congregation and who soon earned for himself the well-deserved title of the "Swedish Moody."⁹⁵

As the tide of Waldenström propaganda rose, so also did the tension between the Augustana Synod and the Mission Friends. The publications of the Mission Friends, *Sions baner*, *Chicago-Bladet*, and *Missionsvännen* were filled with articles highly critical of the Augustana Synod and its religious leaders, while such Augustana journals as *Hemlandet*, *Augustana*, and *Skaffaren* attacked the Mission Friends personally, as well as their theology and practice, charging them with gross heresy, error and waywardness.⁹⁶

Among the Augustana pastors who arose to defend the Synod and attack the defectors none was more effective than Olof Olsson. Olsson possessed perhaps the most discriminating mind in the Augustana ministerium, and as early as 1874 he was warning the Synod of the dangers inherent in Waldenström's new theology.⁹⁷ In a Reformation Day address, given at Augustana College, November 1, 1878, entitled, "The Reformation and Socinianism," Olsson gave a penetrating analysis of Waldenström's theology and drew the conclusion that it was but a reappearance of the old Socinian heresy of the sixteenth century.⁹⁸

⁹² Princell, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁹⁴ A. P. Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 49f.

⁹⁵ E. August Skogsbergh, *Minnen och upplevelser*, Minneapolis, no date, pp. 149ff. See also Bowman, *Missionsvännerna i Amerika*, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-225.

⁹⁶ Virtually every issue of these publications between the years 1877-1879 contain controversial and polemical material, some of it personal and acrimonious.

⁹⁷ See *Augustana*, No. 10, 1874, pp. 225ff. *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1874, pp. 17 and 45. See also *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1875, p. 49f.

⁹⁸ O. Olsson, *Samlande Skrifter* III, Rock Island, 1912, pp. 9-36.

By the time that Princell and the Augustana Synod parted company, the Waldenström theology had become the common property of practically the entire Mission Friend movement in America, for the American hyperevangelicals looked upon Waldenström as their spokesman and great spiritual leader, just as their Swedish brethren did. As in Sweden, so here in America, the Mission Friends became the standard-bearers of Waldenström's viewpoint, and they eagerly made the "new theology" their *ståndpunkt*. With this development the complete rupture between Augustana and the Mission Friends needed only to be formalized in the creation of a new and separate organization. This step was taken in Chicago, February 18-25, 1885, when the Mission Synod and the Ansgarius Synod voted to merge and form the *Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant of America*, with C. A. Björk, onetime lay pastor in Swede Bend, Iowa, as the first president.⁹⁹ The confessional article in the constitution which was adopted at this historic gathering omits all reference to the Augsburg Confession, and merely commits the new denomination to "the Word of God, the holy books of the Old and New Testaments, as the only perfect rule for faith, creed, and conduct."¹⁰⁰ It is thus clear that the Mission Friends were no longer Lutherans, nor did they profess or wish to be known as such. They now had their own independent church organization with its own distinctive theological viewpoint. The separation from the Augustana Synod was complete, and in the course of the rupture Augustana had suffered substantial numerical losses, but had clarified its own doctrinal position. By the time that Waldenström's theology invaded the ranks of the Mission Friends, the possibilities for rapprochement between Augustana and the hyperevangelicals had perhaps passed. The Synod had been too rigid in its insistence upon institutional conformity, and the hyperevangelicals had been too eager to assert and insist on "freedom." But once the hyperevangelical movement had absorbed theological viewpoints which contradicted or seriously modified the historic confessional position of the Lutheran Church the die was cast. For the Augustana Synod to yield to the opposition at this point would involve a compromise of integrity. Separation was inevitable.

When the *Mission Covenant* was organized in 1885, it comprised forty-nine congregations, most of which had been drawn from Augustana. At the same time, other Mission Friends who did not join the

⁹⁹ C. V. Bowman, *The Mission Covenant of America*, op. cit., pp. 133-149.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

Covenant included, first, the congregations which became known as the *Mission Free Church*, who looked to J. G. Princell as their great leader.¹⁰¹ This segment of Mission Friends numbered in 1885 seventeen congregations, composed for the most part of former Augustana members. In the second place, there were the Swedish Congregationalist churches which numbered less than a half dozen in 1885, but counted among their number scores of former Augustana people.¹⁰²

The events connected with the emergence of the Mission Friend movement in America constituted the greatest crisis ever faced by the Augustana Church. This experience had both a deleterious as well as a salutary effect upon the Synod. It was deleterious in the sense that many former members who were earnest Christians were lost to the Synod, and their departure was a weakening of Augustana strength. It was deleterious also in that it created bitterness and resentment in the ranks of Swedish-Americans which took a couple of generations to overcome. It was deleterious, too, in that it provided the enemies of the church an opportunity to ridicule and deride the church of Christ, pointing to "the disciples of the Prince of Peace who fly at each other's throats."

The crisis may be said to have had salutary effects in that it served to clarify the theology of the Augustana Church at those points where historic Lutheranism was being challenged, and thus deepened the confessional self-consciousness of the Synod. The controversy also served to purge the Synod of dissident elements, thus making for greater ultimate unity and conformity. Finally, it served to aid in the delineation of the position which Augustana would occupy in the American Lutheran household, that of being neither "high" nor "low," but somewhere in between.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ This loosely-federated association was incorporated under the laws of Minnesota in 1908 as *The Swedish Evangelical Free Church*.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 212. It must be noted that a considerable number of Mission Friends had joined the Mission societies without affiliating with Augustana congregations. Nevertheless, the great bulk of Mission Friends in the earliest congregations in America had been recruited from the Augustana Synod.

¹⁰³ The most recent account of the Mission Friends in America is the study by Karl A. Olsson, *By One Spirit, A History of the Evangelical Covenant Church of America*, Chicago, 1962. This study was not yet available when the foregoing chapter was written, but appeared after the present work was in the process of publication.

The Era of Adjustment

MARK TWAIN called it the "Gilded Age," while Edwin Lawrence Godkin, editor of the *Nation*, claimed that it was an era with a "chromo civilization." That is what American life in the last quarter of the nineteenth century—and we might add the first decade of the twentieth—looked like to some of its more thoughtful critics. And in some respects they were right, for it was a time when the surface of the American scene wore a shabby, tawdry glitter. There were, for example, the newly rich tycoons of industry who had clawed and slugged their way to the top over the broken backs of their competitors: John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, Daniel Drew, Jay Gould, and James Fisk. There was the sleazy tribe of big-time politicians who made an art of looting the public treasuries, while unctuously proclaiming themselves as humble servants of the public, "Boss" William Marcy Tweed, Fernando Wood, G. Oakley Hall, Roscoe Conkling, Senators Pomeroy and Cameron, and James G. Blaine. There were the czars of "yellow journalism," William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer, who for the sake of increased circulation, managed to get the United States embroiled in a shooting war with Spain. And then there was P. T. Barnum, the circus man, who has been described as "a vulgar, greasy genius, pure brass without any gilding, yet in picturesque and capable effrontery the very embodiment of the age."¹

Underneath this gilded surface, however, the currents of vigor and strength were running deep and swift. There was a new mood of maturity abroad in the land. A vast industrial-urban complex was taking shape, and its parts were linked together by rapid railroad transportation and instant telegraph communications. Electricity was steadily becoming a great new source of power, and the Duryea brothers had succeeded in putting together their first sputtering gasoline "horseless carriage." Free public education was rapidly becoming a universal privilege across the land, and through the financial help of the Car-

¹ L. V. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, 3 vols., New York, 1930, III, p. 12.

negie Foundation, public libraries were springing up like mushrooms in all parts of the country. Henry Hobson Richardson and Louis H. Sullivan were rebuilding the face of America with their new functional architectural innovations for private and public buildings. Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Sidney Lanier, William Dean Howells, Joel Chandler Harris, and Eugene Field were bringing new honors to the field of American literature, while Thomas Eakins, George Inness, Winslow Holmes, Albert Ryder, John La Farge, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens were adding laurels to America's contribution to the world of painting and sculpture. Under Grover Cleveland the federal government was developing a new sense of conscience and moral responsibility, and the notorious "spoils system" began to make way for the merit system under civil service. The American labor movement was successfully challenging the right of capital to exploit human resources with the same disregard for decency with which it had despoiled so much of the nation's natural resources. And the young Republic was flexing its growing muscles, taking its first tentative steps onto the wide stage of world affairs in the role of a youthful, vigorous, though as yet untried, leader in the world community. Gilded or not, this was an age when life in the United States was being transformed from top to bottom, and when to stay in the swim of things required the kind of resourceful flexibility which could and would adjust to meet the exigencies of a fluid and dynamic situation.²

Augustana in a Changing Environment

What was happening to the nation at large in terms of maturation, growth, and expansion, was also happening to the Augustana Synod. Augustana was being confronted with the same need to adjust to new circumstances as other segments of America faced. While the population of the United States from 1880 to 1910 increased approximately 83 per cent,³ the confirmed membership of the Augustana Synod over the same period increased more than 310 per cent.⁴ A correspondingly broad geographical expansion of the Synod is reflected in the fact that by 1910 the annual synodical conventions, which

² For an excellent survey of the period see Richard Current, T. Harry Williams and Frank Freidel, *American History, A Survey*, New York, 1961, pp. 469-610.

³ From 50,155,783 to 91,972,266, *Ibid.*, pp. 904-905.

⁴ From 41,976 to 172,239, Augustana Church Statistics, 1860-1960, *Augustana Annual*, 1962, p. 132.

required substantial congregational resources and building facilities, had convened as far east as New Britain, Connecticut, as far west as Denver, Colorado, and as far north as Red Wing, Minnesota.⁵ This growth and expansion were chiefly due to two factors, namely, the effectiveness of the home missions program which had been inaugurated in 1870, and the immense influx of Swedish immigrants during these decades. It should be noted in this connection that of the 1,300,000 Swedish nationals who came to the United States between 1830 and 1930, no less than 69 per cent arrived in the thirty-year period between 1880 and 1910.⁶

This means that an unprecedented opportunity and a correspondingly heavy responsibility rested upon the Augustana Synod to win these thousands of Swedish immigrants, most of whom were already baptized and confirmed Lutherans, for the Lutheran Church in America. Virtually every report of the synodical president and of the committee for home missions during this period attests to the Synod's awareness of this unparalleled task and opportunity, and it was repeatedly acknowledged by synodical leaders that to win the immigrant masses was the Synod's chief responsibility.⁷

By 1880-1890, however, Augustana was not *only* an immigrant church. Its constituency now included the children, even the grandchildren, of the pioneer founders. This younger generation symbolized the fact that the Augustana Church was no longer a "new-comer" to America; it had by this time been a part of the American scene long enough to experience within its own ranks the changing, maturing process of the times. Thus, even while the Synod continued to busy itself with the incoming immigrants, it sought also to adjust to the needs and requirements of a new milieu. Such adjustment in-

⁵ See *Synodical Minutes* for the years 1906, 1907 and 1909.

⁶ Oscar A. Benson, *Problems in the Accommodation of the Swede to American Culture*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1933, p. 31f.

⁷ Typical of the utterances in the synodical reports are the following from 1880. "Masses of immigrants are reaching our shores and increasing our missionary tasks. What we therefore require are more pastors who can and will go forth with the gospel, sacrifice, and labor as faithful soldiers for Christ. The fulfillment of this task in ever greater measure I would heartily commend to the Synod's attention." President Eric Norelius, *Protokoll*, 1880, p. 15. "Immigrants in ever greater numbers are arriving in America from the homeland, and it has been our duty and blessed responsibility to extend to them counsel, help and guidance in both spiritual and temporal matters. . . . The committee is of the opinion that much more needs to be done for these immigrant masses, and that the Synod ought to devise ways and means which will enable the committee to meet more adequately the needs of the immigrants." Committee report, *Ibid.*, p. 63.

volved both the revision of institutional structures, usages and practices, as well as the creation of new agencies of service.

Revision of Institutional Structure

The encouraging growth and expansion which the Synod had enjoyed since its inception was cause for rejoicing. But it was also cause for grave apprehension, since the very increase in geographical and numerical size carried with it some real dangers which had to be adequately dealt with if the Synod was to continue to prosper. Chief among such dangers was *the unrestrained growth of parochialism which if unchecked would eventuate in disunity*. Parochialism, or sectionalism, had been on the increase for a number of years, but it was not until 1888 that the practical and clear-sighted Erland Carlsson pointed out the danger and suggested its essential cause and remedy. In his last presidential report he declared,

Local and parochial interests, competing literary ventures, indeed, our several schools with their imperative needs and great demands—all threaten our inner unity, tend to chill our Christian comradeship, and unless remedies are applied, will destroy those bonds which hitherto have held us together and contributed to the progress of our work for the Lord and his kingdom. . . . It would be truly deplorable if our mutual trust and fraternal love should be destroyed and replaced among us by suspicion, fault-finding, slander, jealousy and quarrelsomeness. And there is danger that this will actually occur if each and everyone persists in being concerned only about his own best interests, his own local ambitions, his own conference, his own mission field, his own school, and his own publications. If such a spirit is permitted to prevail among us, it will not only extinguish our feelings of mutual love, but will split us asunder, take from us God's blessing, and injure our work. . . . The chief reason for this regrettable situation . . . is to be found in our outdated constitutional arrangements. . . . That our constitutional structure is altogether too loose and indefinite will doubtless be acknowledged by all. . . . Many among us think that the Synod should be merely an advisory body without any legislative power or authority. Under such circumstances everyone may individually do as he pleases with the decisions of Synod. Individualism has altogether too large a place among us. . . . In politics we are nearly all Republicans, desiring a strong centralized federal authority; but in the affairs of the church we have unwittingly become Democrats, desiring a weak decentralized synodical authority, having been unduly influenced by "state's rights" notions. . . . Behold, how we have acted; each one wants to do missionary work by himself, build

his own schools, and publish his own newspapers and journals. . . . May the Lord lead our Synod in upon the golden middle way in the matter of our constitutional structure, so that we neither shipwreck on the Scylla of dictatorship or the Charybdis of selfish parochialism. . . . United we stand, divided we fall.⁸

Behind these remarks of President Carlsson there lay a long-standing disagreement within Augustana regarding the relationship of the Synod to its various parts. The synodical constitution which was adopted in 1860 specified that the Synod consisted of the ordained pastors and the lay delegates representing the congregations of the Synod. Thus, the constitutive factors of Synod were limited to pastors and lay delegates.⁹ Since the pastors were obliged to attend every synodical convention, year after year, while the lay delegation would change from year to year, the pastors would be enabled to exercise a very tight control over the affairs of the church. In such a situation the desires of the congregations might be overlooked. This apparent disregard of the prerogatives and rights of the congregations, as such, and the heavy emphasis upon the ministerial office, seems to have awakened a reaction, for in 1878 a revised constitution was proposed which stated that "the Synod shall consist of all the congregations regularly connected with it, and at the synodical conventions shall be represented by the pastor and one elected delegate from each congregation."¹⁰ This proposal was adopted at the convention in Chicago.¹¹

With the adoption of this proposal the pendulum had swung to the opposite extreme, relegating the ministerial office to a delegatory status only, while making the congregation, as such, the constitutive element of the Synod. This was tantamount to outright congregation-alism wherein the *congregation* and the *church* became virtually synonymous terms. Though the founding fathers envisaged a polity which had congregationalist aspects, in the sense that synodical power and authority were delegated to it by the congregations, it is indubitable that an outright congregationalism did not reflect their concept of a suitable polity.¹²

Defining the Synod in congregationalist terms did not prove acceptable. At the convention in Des Moines, Iowa, 1880, the Synodical

⁸ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1880, pp. 20ff.

⁹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, p. 17.

¹⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1878, appendix, "Förslag till Konstitution," Chap. 1, Article 3.

¹¹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1879, p. 60.

¹² See historical review by L. G. Abrahamson in *Jubel-Album*, *op. cit.*, p. 64. See also article by Conrad Emil Lindberg, "Augustana-synodens författningar," *Minnesskrift, Augustana Synoden, 1860-1910*, *op. cit.*, pp. 70ff.

Council proposed that the Synod "shall consist of all the conferences which are connected with it."¹³ This proposal represented the thinking of men like Peter Sjöblom of Minnesota, who vigorously advocated strong conferences and a weak synod, and who, like Norelius, was afraid that a strong central synodical authority would inevitably lead to bureaucracy.¹⁴ The man who withstood all efforts to weaken the Synod or decentralize church authority was T. N. Hasselquist. He believed that the future well-being of the Augustana Synod required a strong, integrating synodical center which could pull the disparate parts of the church together and make them work in harmony and unity. It was largely through his efforts that the pro-conference faction of Sjöblom was defeated at the convention of 1880.¹⁵

The controversy came to a climax in 1881-1882, when Sjöblom hatched a plot to lead a rebellion against synodical authorities. He had visions of taking the Minnesota Conference out of the Augustana Synod and of establishing instead an independent Minnesota Synod with its own college and theological seminary, its own independent publishing concern, and its own institutions of mercy.¹⁶ These plans, however, were too radical for the erstwhile allies of Sjöblom, particularly Cederstam and Norelius, who withdrew their support and left the field of battle to Sjöblom alone.¹⁷ To take on Hasselquist and his henchmen singlehandedly was too much even for Peter Sjöblom. When, therefore, Hasselquist offered the olive branch of reconciliation, Sjöblom grasped it and promised to try to live in peace with those who did not see the Synod in "the same colors" as he did.¹⁸

The threatened rupture of the Synod was averted, but the fundamental problem of the relationship of the Synod to conferences and congregations remained. So the pot of controversy continued to boil merrily through the years until 1890 when two different constitutional proposals were made. Proposal number one provided that,

¹³ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1880, p. 69.

¹⁴ See letter from P. Sjöblom to E. Norelius, September 6, 1876, *Norelius Collection*, Augustana Archives, and letter from Norelius to Hasselquist, February 29, 1876, *Hasselquist Collection*, Augustana Archives.

¹⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1880, p. 69f. For Hasselquist's approach to the problem see for example, *Augustana*, 1876, No. 8. *Augustana och Missionären*, July 27, 1881. Letter from Hasselquist to Norelius, March 22, 1879, *Norelius Collection*, Augustana Archives.

¹⁶ Letter from P. A. Cederstam to Hasselquist, April 3, 1882, *Hasselquist Collection*, Augustana Archives. P. A. Cederstam to E. Norelius, April 4, 1882, *Norelius Collection*, Augustana Archives.

¹⁷ Letter from Erland Carlsson to Norelius, October, 1882, *Norelius Collection*, Augustana Archives.

¹⁸ Letter from P. Sjöblom to Hasselquist, May 12, 1883, *Hasselquist Collection*.

This Synod shall consist of all ordained pastors and all congregations which are regularly connected with the same, and shall be represented at synodical conventions by elected delegates.¹⁹

Constitutional proposal number two provided that,

This Synod shall consist of all those district synods which are regularly connected with the same, and shall be represented at the synodical conventions by the presidents of the district synods, together with one pastor and one layman from every twenty-five congregations, excepting the theological faculty and the officers of synod.²⁰

With reference to the two constitutional proposals President S. P. A. Lindahl in his annual report to the church in 1890 had this to say,

The question of a new constitution seems to have been brought one step nearer solution. The two essentially opposite proposals which will come before this assembly will force the Synod to express itself clearly in this important matter. It must decide whether it earnestly intends to preserve and maintain the synodical unity or divide itself into several synods. We are all aware that a judicious solution to this problem is of immense importance.²¹

Even a quick glance at these two constitutional proposals reveals that the first one represented the procentralization faction which would not change the essential features of the existing synodical structure except to strengthen it and clarify its relationships. It is also evident that the second proposal expressed the sentiments of the anticentralization forces. This plan would radically alter the basic structure of the Synod and transform the conferences into semi-independent district synods, exercising the real power and authority in the Church, while the central synod would thereby be reduced to an advisory and consultative status.

The Synod was not ready at the convention in Jamestown, New York, 1890, to make a final choice between the two proposals; it elected a study committee instead.²² Indeed, it was not until 1893 that a decision was made. That year at Rock Island, Illinois, the Synod adopted a slightly revised version of proposal number one, and one of the members of the revision and sponsoring committee was none other than the veteran campaigner for "states' rights," Peter Sjöblom.²³ This action was ratified at the convention in St. Peter, Minnesota,

¹⁹ The proposed constitutions are given in full in *Augustana*, May 8, 1890 pp. 10-11, 14-15.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²¹ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1890, p. 18; *Augustana*, June 26, 1890, p. 3.

²² *Augustana*, June 26, 1890.

²³ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1893, p. 82.

1894, thus clarifying an issue which had distracted the Synod for many years.²⁴

The new constitution defined the Synod as consisting of *pastors* and *congregations* in regular connection with the same, indicating that the ministerial office, like the congregation, is divinely instituted; the office is not a mere *function* created by the congregation; nor is the church the creation of the ministerial office. Neither the church nor office have priority over the other, but together constitute the divine institution ordained by Christ.²⁵ Congregations within a given territory shall comprise the conference unit; the number and boundaries of conferences to be determined by the Synod, each conference being represented at synodical conventions by an equal number of clerical and lay delegates, the number not to exceed two delegates, one clerical and one lay, for every fifteen hundred communicants or a larger fraction thereof. These delegates, together with the members of the Synodical Council,²⁶ the officers of Synod, the theological faculty, the president of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, a delegate from each of the boards of directors of the different departments of activity under synodical control and duly incorporated, together with a delegate from each of the boards of directors of the conference institutions of learning, were to constitute the voting members of Synod at annual conventions.²⁷

Of this constitution a perceptive commentator has declared,

In these vigorous strokes of the pen the Synod emerges from whatever may have been uncertain in the polity of past years. The mutual relations between the pastor and the congregation, their relation to the Synod and the conference, the relation of the respective conferences to each other and to the Synod, and the position of the institutions of learning are hereby established, giving marked prominence to the ministerial office.²⁸

²⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1894, p. 30.

²⁵ A. D. Mattson, *Polity of the Augustana Synod*, op. cit., p. 94.

²⁶ The Synodical Council was first created in 1879, consisting of the president and vice-president of the Synod and one clerical and one lay delegate from each conference. The new constitution provided that the Synodical Council should comprise the president and vice-president of the Synod, the presidents of the conferences, and one elected delegate from each Conference. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

²⁷ See "Konstitution for den Evanglisk-Lutherska Augustana Synoden i Norra Amerika," *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1893, pp. 82-89.

²⁸ Martin T. Englund, "Church Polity of the Augustana Synod," *The Augustana Synod, 1860-1910*, op. cit., p. 61. An excellent analysis of the theological principles expressed in the constitution of 1894 is given in C. E. Lindberg, "Augustana-synodens författningar," *Minnesskrift, Augustana Synoden, 1860-1910*, op. cit., pp. 70ff.

Although the adoption of the new constitution did not silence all anticentralization sentiment, nor purge all parochialism from the Synod,²⁹ it did provide the Augustana Church with a structure so well suited to its American environment that the basic principles here affirmed have never needed to be discarded or seriously modified.

Changes in the Cultus

As there was need for change and revision in the polity of the Augustana Church, so also was there need for changes in the worship life of the church, in that broad area called the cultus. This is evident from the comments made by one of the pioneer pastors, Eric Norelius, who was an eyewitness and active participant in the life of the church during the earliest days of the Synod. Speaking of the church buildings erected by the first Swedish settlers he says,

That our Swedish immigrants would erect small, simple, and inexpensive churches in the early days could well be expected; but that they would deliberately make them so uncommonly ugly and uncomfortable in so many respects is a cause for downright amazement. . . . What influenced the immigrants more than anything else to erect prosaic and ugly church buildings was the fact that they were surrounded by American denominations whose churches were prosaic and ugly. The Puritan spirit prevailing so strongly in these churches completely dominated the architectural style of the times, and demanded that a church should be an oblong structure like a huge "shoe box," with oblong windows and a flat ceiling. On the back wall there must be a platform across the whole room on which the pulpit was placed with both sides open like a "saloon bar," with steps leading to it, and a bench against the wall behind it. When several preachers were present they would crowd in on this bench. . . . This was the church architecture of Puritanism, and the Swedish immigrants copied these patterns, and chanced thereby to create genuine ecclesiastical monstrosities. They, nevertheless, felt that something was lacking, and they began surreptitiously to bring in altar rails, and a sort of table altar placed in front of the pulpit. But it took a good long while before they built towers on their churches, and even longer before they dared to peak the tower with a cross. You might know they did not want to be considered Roman Catholics!³⁰

It is interesting to note from Dr. Norelius' description the central

²⁹ The agitation for separation of Augustana College and Augustana Theological Seminary was in part inspired by and an expression of the spirit of parochialism and sectionalism.

³⁰ Eric Norelius, *De svenska församlingarnas . . . i Amerika*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 251f.

place given to the pulpit in the early pioneer churches, not only theoretically, but actually and physically. The pulpit was generally placed in the very center of the platform, the focal point of the room, with an inconspicuous table altar placed on the floor level, at the foot of the pulpit. These features, including the "shoe-box" proportions, flat ceiling and "towerless" exterior, characterized the little chapel at Andover, later known as the "Jenny Lind chapel," as well as other early churches, if we may judge from early photographs of these buildings.

Perhaps these "prosaic and ugly" church buildings denoted not only American, but free-church Swedish influence as well. Photographs of the early "Ansgar chapels" scattered throughout the countryside in Sweden, and indeed Rosenius' own church in Stockholm, the Bethlehem chapel, exhibit a number of these same characteristics—oblong buildings without towers, the interior of which was designed for meetings rather than for worship, with a platform at one end and a speaker's pulpit in the center of the platform. These free-church chapels had at least this in common with the Puritan tradition, that the exposition of the Word, the office of preaching, was pre-eminent, and the pulpit therefore overshadowed the altar. Thus, the early pioneers were imitating the free-church models they had seen in their homeland, and therefore did not radically differ from the Puritan and Reformed tradition in their notion of a functional church design.

When these early, small chapels began to be replaced by more imposing edifices, the American influence of the "Gilded Age" became more apparent. Whether it was the Andover church, in Andover, Illinois, the Immanuel church in Chicago, the First church in Rockford, the Augustana church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, or the Augustana church in Denver, Colorado, a somewhat characteristic type of church building emerged with a nave more nearly square than oblong, with a flat rather than a vaulted ceiling, and a high platform at the far end of the room, at the front center of which stood the pulpit, with a small, inconspicuous altar below on the floor level. Behind the pulpit, on a still higher level, was the choir loft, backed by a huge rank of gilded organ pipes, most of which were silent dummies. The wooden pillar supports, the proscenium, the altar rail, as well as altar and pulpit were frequently painted to simulate expensive Italian marble, while the walls were decorated with pious inscriptions and realistic figures and symbols. Choir loft, pulpit, and pew were arranged to give the singers, the preacher and the "audience" a clear, unob-

structed view of each other, for the place was designed as an assembly hall where to be able to "enjoy" was predicated on being able to hear and see, even if it became necessary to build a gallery or balcony encircling two thirds of the wall space of the nave. The exteriors were often astonishing exhibitions of the brick layer's art, with intricate and interesting patterns executed with two, or even three different colors of brick or stone.

Perhaps such church buildings left a good deal to be desired in terms of good taste and historic continuity, but they represented the earnest efforts of a people whose immigrant and pioneer days did not lie very far behind them. They provided places of worship which met the religious demands and the spiritual needs of both old and young who were beginning to participate in the swiftly changing life of their community.

The services of public worship which were conducted in these Augustana churches looked back to the liturgical traditions of Sweden. The official *Handbok* and *Psalmbok* of the Church of Sweden were used by the Swedish pastors and congregations of the Augustana Synod from the beginning, adapting the Swedish Orders to the American situation wherever necessary. There was very little disposition to change the liturgical usages, and Augustana for a number of years was content to follow the lead of the Swedish Church, making only such changes as were first made and approved in the homeland.³¹ There was apparently, however, a feeling that Augustana ought to prepare a church book more nearly suited to its own American needs. Thus, from 1870 to 1895, the subject of an Augustana church book was discussed at practically every synodical convention; resolutions were passed, committees elected, reports were given, and proposals of various kinds were presented and debated.³² Except for recommending that the Church Book of the General Council be used in those congregations which employed the English language,³³ nothing of major importance was accomplished until 1885 when the Enander-Bohman Publishing Company of Chicago on their own initiative issued a Swedish Church Book, and also an English translation, which included the changes and revisions which the Synod up to that time had made in

³¹ For example, in 1863 (*Protokoll*, 1863, p. 15) the Synod adopted the new series of preaching texts which had been previously prepared and introduced in Sweden, and in 1869, the Synod voted to bring its Handbook up-to-date by incorporating in it the changes and revisions adopted by the Swedish Church.

³² The term *Church Book* means a manual which includes Order for Worship and ministerial acts.

³³ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1871, p. 21; 1880, p. 74.

the Swedish rite.³⁴ That this book did not meet the demands of the Church is evident from the fact that the subject of a church book continued to agitate the councils of the church.

In 1895, however, the Church Book Committee reported that a new liturgical manual had been adopted the previous year by the Church of Sweden, and recommended that the Synod publish a revised version of this new Swedish Church Book for use in Augustana congregations, being guided in its preparation by the liturgical usages given in the Church Book of the General Council.³⁵ This recommendation received favorable action and the committee was requested to include in the new Church Book an Order for Morning Worship with Holy Communion, an Order for Morning Worship without Holy Communion, an Order for Holy Communion without Morning Worship, an Order for Vespers or Occasional Worship, and an Order for Baptism. This book was to be ready for use throughout the congregations by Advent Sunday, 1895.³⁶ At the Omaha convention, 1896, the committee reported that the new Church Book had been published, giving the Augustana Synod, for the first time, a liturgical manual which was essentially its own.³⁷

No sooner was the Church Book of 1895 completed than the committee was requested to prepare an English translation to be used in the English-speaking sections of the Synod.³⁸ By 1905 the Committee had completed this task, and the Augustana Church now had excellent liturgical manuals in both Swedish and English. This Church Book met the needs of the Synod so well that it served the church for a quarter of a century without substantial changes or modifications.

While the liturgical usages of Augustana were undergoing change and revision, a similar process was at work in the music of the church. The Swedish *Psalmbok* of 1819 had been in use throughout the Swedish congregations of the Synod since the beginning.³⁹ By 1874, however, there was a felt need for a new hymnal, and accordingly that year a *Psalmbok* committee was elected, consisting of T. N. Hasselquist, J. Ausland and Th. Winquist.⁴⁰ The following year this committee presented to Synod one of the most perceptive and penetrating

³⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1887, p. 77; 1878, p. 76; *Augustana*, 1887, Number 11. Ander, *Hasselquist*, *op. cit.*, p. 183. E. W. Olson, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

³⁵ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1895, p. 68f.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

³⁷ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1896, p. 66f.

³⁸ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1898, p. 80.

³⁹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1863, p. 28; 1875, p. 35.

⁴⁰ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1874, pp. 44ff.

analyses of the place and significance of congregational music in the life of the church ever heard by an Augustana delegation. The report spelled out in both theoretical and practical terms what an adequate hymnal ought to be like. The report reflects the style and thought of Hasselquist, and if the report is indeed from his pen, the venerable Father rarely, if ever, excelled this piece of writing.⁴¹

The committee, waiting for a new *Psalmbok* to be issued in Sweden, did little more for the next few years than continue its study of the subject. In 1878, however, it was reported to the church that the independent publishing firm of Engberg and Holmberg of Chicago were ready to issue a revised version of the Swedish hymnal of 1819 with such emendations as were necessary to make it suitable for American use.⁴² This book was published and adopted the following year by Augustana and commended to the congregations.⁴³ Although there was some discussion of a new hymnal at synodical conventions from year to year, the Engberg-Holmberg edition was reissued several times and continued to be the *Psalmbok* of the Synod until 1923.

A song book, to be used at informal services and devotional gatherings, containing a substantial collection of the evangelistic hymns and songs from the evangelical revivals of Sweden was published in 1891, under the title of *Hemlandssånger*, and enjoyed wide popularity as long as Swedish services were held in Augustana churches.⁴⁴ And to meet the demands of the English-speaking constituency, the theological faculty was commissioned, in 1895 to prepare an English hymnal.⁴⁵ This book was published in 1899, and a companion music edition appeared in 1901.⁴⁶ Nor were the musical needs of the children forgotten, as the church published a Sunday School Song Book in 1884, which was revised and enlarged in 1903.⁴⁷

The greatest change in the music of the Augustana Church during the period of adjustment, however, occurred in the *quality* of the music in the average congregation. The improvement in musical quality was chiefly due, undoubtedly, to the increased use of more adequate instrumental leadership. The earliest churches had either a small, wheezy melodeon to lead the congregational singing or no instrument

⁴¹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1875, pp. 34-36.

⁴² *Protokol*, Augustana Synod, 1878, p. 39.

⁴³ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1878, p. 39; 1879, p. 53f. Beginning in 1884 the synodical minutes are called *Referat*.

⁴⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1892, p. 101f.

⁴⁵ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1895, p. 72.

⁴⁶ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1899, p. 35f; 1902, p. 86.

⁴⁷ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1884, p. 41; 1900, p. 89; 1903, p. 104.

at all. Where there was no accompanying instrument the pastor or some musically apt layman would often act as the cantor of the congregation, lining out the hymn tunes and leading in the liturgical responses. As the early, hard, lean years were supplanted by better times, and a measure of prosperity displaced the pinch of poverty, the new church buildings which were replacing the pioneer chapels were usually equipped either with good quality reed organs, or in the larger congregations, with pipe organs. As these instruments were installed in the parish churches, young people were inspired and encouraged to learn to play them. Indeed, it was not too unusual to find an Augustana parish before the turn of the century, where there was not only an organ in the church, but a parish choir, a parish band, and not infrequently a parish orchestra. Though the musical renditions of such groups may not have been brilliant exhibitions of training and technique, they nevertheless symbolized the growth in the Synod of a measure of culture and refinement which reflected and bespoke the great change which was occurring since the days of the founding fathers.⁴⁸

It was time, too, for revising and bringing up-to-date the basic educational tools of the church, its primary textbooks and literary aids. The chief religious educational text among Scandinavian Lutherans has historically been *Luther's Small Catechism*, supplemented by the *Large Catechism*. These confessional symbols of Lutheranism have been the basic tools for Christian instruction among Scandinavians since the days of the Reformation.⁴⁹ One of the very first books to come off the press of T. N. Hasselquist's Swedish printing shop in Galesburg in the summer of 1855 was a reprint of Dr. Peter Fjellstedt's version of *Luther's Small Catechism*.⁵⁰ This book was used by the earliest Swedish pastors and congregations to instruct the young in the fundamentals of the faith. The first convention of the Augustana Church, 1860, adopted a resolution urging the catechization of the youth each week,⁵¹ and two years later, 1862, a special catechism committee was elected to prepare and publish a new version of *Luther's Catechism* with Bible proof texts for each explanation.⁵² The committee prepared the proof text editions and circulated

⁴⁸ Carl L. Nelson, *The Sacred and Secular Music of the Swedish Settlers in the Mid-west, 1841-1917*, Doctoral Dissertation, New York University, 1950, Ms.

⁴⁹ J. A. Hallgren, *Den Svenska elementarundervisningens historia*, Stockholm, 1877, pp. 37ff.

⁵⁰ E. W. Olson, *Augustana Book Concern . . .*, op. cit., p. 4f.

⁵¹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, p. 13.

⁵² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1862, p. 13.

the manuscript among the pastors for comments and criticism,⁵³ but it was not until 1868 that this edition appeared in print.⁵⁴

It was felt, however, that to append a few proof texts to the catechetical text was not enough. What was needed, declared President Jonas Swensson in his annual report, 1873, was a more unified, systematized and linguistically up-to-date version of the catechism, and since the mother church in Sweden did not seem ready to act in the matter, it behooved the Synod to set to work to create its own updated version of the catechism.⁵⁵ Accordingly, a special catechism committee consisting of T. N. Hasselquist, Jonas Swensson, Erland Carlsson, Olof Olsson, Eric Norelius and J. Ausland, was selected to prepare a new version of the catechism.⁵⁶ This distinguished committee worked diligently until 1879 before it was ready to make a final proposal. The entire catechetical text had been reworked, comparing various versions, changing, revising, deleting and adding phrases, paragraphs, and whole sections, until the committee was convinced that the final draft spoke the language of children and not of erudite theologians. The result of these labors was a version of the catechism which admirably suited the educational needs of that day. In simple but well-chosen Swedish, with a readable style, the explanations set forth in the language of youth the great truths of the Lutheran Church. The book was published in 1879 and quickly became a best seller.⁵⁷ Indeed, it became the most widely used publication issued by the Augustana press, with 250,000 copies having been sold by 1910.⁵⁸ A slightly revised version and an English translation of this textbook were published by the Synod in 1902.⁵⁹ In the average Augustana congregation of this period the catechism was the primary center around which the entire parish educational program revolved, and confirmation with its introduction into adult church membership was predicated upon an assumed mastery of the entire text of the *Small Catechism*. The copyright of the Augustana version of the catechism was made the property of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, and the substantial profits realized from the sales of this textbook became a financial boon to the institution for many years.⁶⁰

⁵³ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1864, p. 19f.

⁵⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1868, p. 15.

⁵⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1873, p. 8f.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁵⁷ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1879, p. 19f; 1880, p. 71.

⁵⁸ O. V. Holmgrain, "Augustana-synodens förlagsverksamhet," *Minnesskrift Augustana Synoden, 1860-1910*, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

⁵⁹ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1901, p. 87; 1902, p. 13.

⁶⁰ Holmgrain, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

Second only to the catechism as a principal educational tool was the Bible history textbook. In the early years of the Synod *Barth's Bible History* had been in general use throughout the congregations.⁶¹ In 1884 it was reported to the Synod that Pastor A. Hult had prepared a new Bible history which he wished to present to the Synod for possible use throughout the congregations.⁶² A special committee was elected to revise, amend, and improve the study in preparation for publication.⁶³ The committee worked at this task until 1887, when it was announced that at last Augustana had its own Bible history textbook.⁶⁴ To make this excellent little textbook available to the growing number of children who preferred English, the Synod decided in 1893 to translate the book into English,⁶⁵ but this work was not completed until 1899.⁶⁶

How well the little Bible history met and satisfied the educational needs of the Church at this point may be judged from the fact that for forty years this book was the companion piece to the catechism, a primary educational tool of the Augustana Church.

Literary aids in the form of Sunday school papers designed for the devotional reading of children and youth came into being in this period as a supplement to the basic educational tools of the Augustana Church. A beginning in this field of activity had been made somewhat earlier when a little sheet called *Barnvännan* made its appearance in 1872 under the private sponsorship of two pastors Anders Hult and J. G. Princell.⁶⁷ Four years later, in 1876, the Synod took official notice of the publication and recommended it to all pastors and congregations.⁶⁸

It was not until 1886, however, that a children's devotional paper began to get anything like synod-wide circulation. In that year a new paper, *Barnens Tidning*, was published as a semi-official Sunday school paper, edited by S. P. A. Lindahl and H. P. Quist. The venture proved successful, and in 1889 it absorbed the earlier *Barnvännan*. This enlarged Sunday school paper enjoyed a subscription list which virtually covered the Synod.⁶⁹

⁶¹ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1862, p. 13. C. G. Barth, *Biblisk historia*, Engberg-Holmberg, Chicago, 1886.

⁶² *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1884, p. 30.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 61; 1886, p. 68.

⁶⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1887, p. 74.

⁶⁵ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1893, p. 74.

⁶⁶ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1899, pp. 62, 69f.

⁶⁷ E. W. Olson, *Augustana Book Concern . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁶⁸ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1876, p. 48.

⁶⁹ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1890, p. 71. Lindahl's annual report from the

To promote and encourage the publication and dissemination of Christian literature for children and youth, an interested group of young people, including several members of the faculty of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, formed a society in Rock Island in 1877 which called itself *Ungdomens Vänner* (The Friends of Youth) which was reorganized in 1883 as the *Augustana Tract Society*. Under the auspices of this group a definite impetus was given to the production of literature aimed at winning the young for the cause of Christ. Devotional papers and tracts in both Swedish and English were published and spread throughout the Church through the efforts of this organization, which sought in this way to meet the needs of the day.⁷⁰

Book Concern states that each issue of *Barnen's Tidning* numbered 25,000 copies, and was thus the largest selling item of the publishing house.

⁷⁰ E. W. Olson, *op. cit.*, p. 15f.

Marshalling the Resources

Creation of New Service Agencies

AN INEVITABLE AND INTEGRAL PART of an institution's growth and maturity is the emergence within its corporate life of certain specific categories of need, the development of areas of life which demand their own media of expression, control, and promotion. With respect to the Augustana Church the *period of adjustment* witnessed the emergence of just such needs and the demands for corresponding media within the framework of the Synod.

Organizing the Youth

Aside from the eleemosynary projects, the first demand for a special agency to minister to the changing needs of a specific segment of the Augustana Synod came from the youth of the church.

The oft-mentioned "youth problem" does not seem to have disturbed the Augustana Synod very deeply during the first decade of its existence. Very few references to the youth of the church appear in the official records of the Synod, the church press, or the personal correspondence of church leaders in the early years.¹

There may be several reasons for this synodical silence regarding the "youth problem," but part of the reason was undoubtedly the simple fact that in the very earliest period the synod's *second generation* was busy growing up, and posed no problem except that of requiring facilities and means for proper religious education, at home, at school, and in the church. But as these children began to reach young adulthood, they required new attention and their needs demanded a fresh concern on the part of the Synod. These young people represented the church of the future; to keep them vitally connected with the church and faithful to the Lord was a task and responsibility second to none. It is significant, however, that the youth movement in the Augustana Church was not initiated by the Synod,

¹ Cf. Adolf Hult, "Augustana-synodens Ungdomsföreningar," *Minnesskrift. Augustana Synoden, 1860-1910*, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

but had its genesis in local congregations long before the Synod itself was ready to act on behalf of its youth.²

The earliest attempt to organize the young people into a special group and provide for them a program of activity which would meet both their spiritual and social needs seems to have been launched by a young theological student, John Teleen, in 1872 while serving the congregation in Des Moines, Iowa.³ The second endeavor to meet the needs of the youth of the church was made by Dr. Olof Olsson about 1874 in his congregation at Free Mount, Kansas. The constitution which Dr. Olsson drew up for his Young People's Society is of interest, since it expresses the chief purposes which motivated the youth movement throughout the church. According to the constitution of the Free Mount *Ynglinga föreningen*, the purposes of the organization were to provide opportunity for edification and encouragement in moral living, education in religious and cultural subjects, and social contact between Christian young men and women in an atmosphere which would accord with Christian principles.⁴

The Young People's Society, however, which became a sort of model for others was the one which was organized in May, 1877, at Moline, Illinois. This group had the help and encouragement of several faculty members of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, notably, Dr. Olof Olsson, who was made an honorary member of the society. An annual program of activity was launched which included the establishment of a parish library and financial assistance to the local congregation and Augustana College and Seminary. By 1890 this society had gathered a library of over five hundred volumes and had raised \$3,951.10 for various worthy causes.⁵

The Young People's Society of Andover, Illinois, which was formed July 8, 1880, had the unusual distinction of being the first organization for the youth of the Church which permitted women to become full-fledged members. This memorable bit of history becomes more easily understood when it is recalled that the moving, guiding spirit behind this Andover enterprise was the dynamic daughter of Dr. Erland Carlsson, pastor of the Andover congregation

² Victor E. Beck, "Our Luther League," *After Seventy-Five Years*, op. cit., pp. 255ff.

³ Articles by John Teleen, *Young Lutheran Companion*, February 9, March 2, 1907.

⁴ Martin E. Carlson, *Youth March, A History of the Augustana Synod Luther League*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1947, p. 18. Pamphlet entitled *Forward in Faith* published by Augustana Synod Luther League.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

at the time. Miss Emmy Carlsson, the directing and organizing genius of the Young People's Society at Andover, made ample room for herself and her sisters in the affairs of this new organization, and from the very beginning the women were well represented not only in the membership rolls but also in all other phases of activity. Miss Emmy later married Pastor Carl A. Evald, minister of Erland Carlsson's former Immanuel Church in Chicago. Well known throughout the Synod as "Emmy Evald," she became the most distinguished woman in the annals of the Augustana Church as the leader of the Woman's Missionary Society.⁶

With these examples to inspire them, the young people in other congregations throughout the Synod began forming similar organizations. Societies sprang up in St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota, Pontiac, Rhode Island, Denver, Colorado, Albert City, Iowa, and Geneva, Illinois. But this development met some opposition. There were some among both the clergy and laity in the Synod who looked with distrust and suspicion upon young people's societies. The fear was voiced that such associations might very well develop separatistic tendencies and draw the young people away from the church. Furthermore, it was possible, said some, that these societies could easily degenerate into mere social clubs to the spiritual detriment of all who belonged to them.⁷ In spite of such opposition and discouragement, the youth of the church continued to band together and form their own association.

The idea of federating the local youth societies into a more comprehensive organization came from New York City where in 1888, Pastor E. F. Mohldenke, minister of St. Peter's German Lutheran Church, organized the *Central Association of Lutheran Young People's Associations of the City of New York*. The aim and purpose of this association was "to further the growth of the Lutheran Church, enhance the intellectual improvement of its members, and promote a spirit of friendly intercourse among them."⁸ To aid in the realization of these aims the Association began the publication of a paper called *The Luther League Review*, which was the first use of the term *Luther League* in connection with the youth movement. The idea of strengthening the cause by federation spread, and in 1893 the *New York State Luther League* was formed. The regional federations of Luther Leagues

⁶ Adolf Hult, *Minnesskrift*, op. cit., p. 396f. Carlson, op. cit., p. 20f.

⁷ S. G. Öhman, "Ungdomsföreningarna i Augustana-synodens församlingar," *Korsbaneret*, 1900, pp. 61ff.

⁸ Carlson, op. cit., p. 12.

suggested a national federation. This final and logical step was taken in 1895 when representatives from twenty states and the District of Columbia met in Pittsburgh and formed the *Luther League of America*, a national organization which selected Luther's coat of arms as its official emblem and as its motto the phrase, "Of the church, by the church, and for the church."⁹

It was not long before a number of Young People's Societies of the Augustana Synod enrolled as members of the *Luther League of America*, and thus launched the Luther League idea in the Synod. Soon local societies were beginning to call themselves the *Luther League*.¹⁰ The period from 1885 to 1890 saw many of the local Luther Leagues banding themselves into District Leagues, and thus paving the way for the formation of the conference Luther Leagues.

It was the Kansas Conference which took the lead in federating the Luther League within its boundaries into the first *Conference Luther League* in the Augustana Church. This occurred October 17, 1903, in the Trinity Lutheran Church at Topeka, Kansas. Two years later, October, 1905, the Iowa Conference Luther League was formed, followed by Illinois Conference League, 1908, the Nebraska Conference League, 1909, and the California Conference League, 1910.¹¹

As the number of conference Luther Leagues increased, the next logical step was the formation of a national federation. At the synodical convention in Stanton, Iowa, 1905, the first tentative steps were taken in this direction, as a committee was selected to draw up plans for such an organization.¹² The committee worked for two years before it felt ready to bring its report to the convention floor of the Synod.¹³ At the convention held in New Britain, Connecticut, June 13-19, 1907, the committee presented the following recommendations:

1. That Luther Leagues be organized in all congregations of the Augustana Synod.
2. That local Luther Leagues be federated into District Leagues, and District Leagues into Conference Leagues in every Conference of the Synod.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12f.

¹⁰ Adolf Hult, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

¹¹ Carlson, *op. cit.*, p. 29f. The remaining Conference Luther Leagues were organized in the following order: Minnesota, 1911; New England, 1916; New York, 1920; Superior, 1927; Columbia, 1927; Red River Valley, 1931; Canada, 1940. Texas, which in 1903 was a part of the Kansas Conference, dates its conference Luther League from the Topeka meeting in 1903.

¹² *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1905, p. 23f.

¹³ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1906, p. 148f.

3. That the Conference Luther Leagues be federated into a synodical League.
4. That the Synodical Luther League affiliate with the National Luther League of America.
5. That each Conference recognize the constitutions of the local, district and Conference Luther Leagues, and that the Synod recognize the constitutions of the Conference and synodical Luther Leagues.
6. That the "Luther League Topics" suggested by the National Luther League of America be followed by the Leagues in the Augustana Church.¹⁴

But the Synod was not yet ready to give its unqualified endorsement to a youth movement about which some people in the Church seemed to have serious reservations. Therefore, for a couple of years the Synod handled the Luther League reports rather gingerly, sending them back to committee for further study.¹⁵ It was not until 1910 that the Synod approved a proposed constitution for a synodical Luther League, and voted to authorize Professor Frank Nelson "to effect the organization of a synodical Luther League and report the matter to the secretary of the Synod."¹⁶ In accordance with this synodical decision, a convention of Luther League delegates, including eighteen pastors and eighteen laymen from eight states, representing five Conferences, assembled in the Swedish Lutheran Bethlehem Church, Chicago, December 2-4, 1910, and organized the *Luther League of the Augustana Synod*.¹⁷

With the formation of the *Synodical Luther League* the Augustana Church had by no means solved all the problems connected with the spiritual, social, and intellectual needs of youth in relationship with the Church. But the Synod had accommodated and adjusted both its thinking and its institutional structure to include the youth of the Church as a special segment of its population having special needs which demanded particular attention and concern. Thus, by 1910 a foundation had been laid for a specialized ministry to youth; upon that foundation the Augustana Church would be enabled to build a strong and effective program of education, service, and recruitment related to its youth.

¹⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1907, pp. 151ff.

¹⁵ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1908, pp. 159ff.; 1909, p. 149.

¹⁶ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1910, pp. 199ff.

¹⁷ Carlson, *op. cit.*, p. 49f.

The Recruitment of Women

While the youth of the Church were creating an agency through which they might more adequately express themselves, the women of the Church were beginning to think along the same lines. Needless to say, women have always been active in the work of God's kingdom, and there is no period in the annals of Augustana when this is not true. From the earliest pioneer days, the wives and mothers of the immigrants were in the forefront of the work of the Church, quietly undergirding the cause of Christ by their prayers, toil, and sacrificial giving.¹⁸ It seems to have been taken for granted that whenever some need or problem arose in a congregation, the women would be there to apply themselves to its solution by whatever manner and means the circumstances called for. But there was no attempt to organize the women, to direct their energies and interest toward specific goals and purposes. After the passing of the pioneer period, however, with its grinding poverty and back-breaking toil, and the coming of better times and a rising standard of living, the women of the church began to sense the need for some more specific means of expressing their Christian faith and concern, and for an appropriate outlet for their Christian energy and interest. All that was needed was a leader with vision, enthusiasm, and courage. Such a person was Emmy Evald, the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Erland Carlsson, and wife of Carl A. Evald, pastor of the Immanuel Church, Chicago.

Here was a remarkable woman. Early in life she seems to have come to the conviction that the most appropriate outlet for the feminine energies in the Synod, and the most timely and worthy goal for women's interest and labor, was Christian missions. Thus, a women's missionary agency in the Church would constitute not only a great religious resource, but also a most suitable medium through which the women of the Church could express their Christian faith and love. Accordingly, she organized one adult and two junior missionary groups in the Immanuel congregation.¹⁹ The success of this local endeavor convinced her of the feasibility of a synod-wide agency which would enlist the combined strength of the women of the Church on behalf of missions.

The first tentative plans were laid by Mrs. Evald and a few close friends at the synodical convention in 1891. The following year, June

¹⁸ Charlotte Odman, "Noble Women Stood Behind Them," *Lutheran Companion*, June 1, 1960, pp. 29ff.

¹⁹ Emmy Evald, "Remember How God Led Us Fifty Years," *These Fifty Years, 1892-1942*, Chicago, 1942, p. 5.

1892, when the Synod assembled at Lindsborg, Kansas, some fifty women from various parts of the Church met in the parsonage of Dr. and Mrs. C. A. Swensson, and under Mrs. Evald's leadership organized the *Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society* of the Augustana Synod, with the following officers, president, Mrs. Emmy Evald, Chicago, Illinois; recording secretary, Mrs. Alma Swensson, Lindsborg, Kansas; corresponding secretary, Mrs. Maria Enstam, New Haven, Connecticut; treasurer, Mrs. Ida Sannquist, Lindsborg, Kansas. The charter membership roll numbered forty-eight women, representing virtually every section of the Synod.²⁰ This new society adopted the following resolutions:

1. That present organizations of women within our congregations be urged to join this society and to send their contributions to our treasurer and that congregations that lack societies be urged to organize such.
2. That a vice-president be appointed in each conference to work for the success of the cause within her territory.
3. That the vice-president request the president of each mission district of the Synod to appoint a woman for the special purpose of working for the society's welfare.
4. That every person that gives fifty cents or more annually becomes a member of the society.
5. That the officers form a committee to arrange next year's meeting.²¹

These resolutions were presented to the synodical convention with a request that they be approved. The Synod responded as follows:

Since missions is the greatest and most important activity of the church of Christ, and since we as Lutheran Christians, in grateful acknowledgement of the abundant grace that God has shown us as individuals and as a church, feel it to be our duty, in every way possible, to take part in the work of missions, and since the needs on the home and foreign fields are so great that we must make use of all our resources to fill them; and since the women have always taken an active part in extending the Kingdom of Christ; and since at this meeting, 50 women, from widely scattered places in our church, have gathered and in prayer to God unanimously decided to establish an Evangelical Lutheran Woman's Society which has as the object of its activity the furthering of our home and foreign mission work;

²⁰ Emmy Evald, "History of the Woman's Missionary Society," *Survey of Thirty-five Years Activities, Woman's Missionary Society Augustana Lutheran Church, America*, Chicago, 1927, pp. 3ff.

²¹ Historical Document, Minutes of the Organization Meeting of The Woman's Missionary Society of Augustana Synod, *These Fifty Years*, op. cit., p. 21.

Therefore be it resolved:

- 1. That the Synod express its joy over this society and grants to it its undivided approval;
- 2. That the Synod commends it to its pastors and congregations for the receiving of all encouragement and support that is due it.²²

With synodical approval to give it prestige and standing throughout the Church, the Woman's Missionary Society now set out to write one of the greatest success stories in the history of the Augustana Church. No agency of the Synod, indeed, not even the Synod itself, was more ably organized or competently managed than the Woman's Missionary Society. But beyond its organizational efficiency, the Society, in contrast to some other agencies of the Synod, had a crystal-clear conception of its purpose; it knew why it existed, its *raison d'etre* was unambiguous. This important fact gave the Society both cohesive-ness and drive. It fostered a keen self-consciousness, a powerful sense of mission, and put meaning and direction into every phase of its activity. With remarkable ingenuity and imaginative resourcefulness it set out to recruit members, raise money, and formulate a multi-pronged program of service. By 1895 a sum of \$6,000 had been raised for home and foreign missions, and the membership numbered approximately two hundred.²³ A decade later, in 1906, the first issue of *Mission Tidings* came off the press. It indicated that the membership had reached more than five hundred, and a resumé of the treasurer's reports indicated clearly the magnitude and increasing scope of the Society's activities since its inception in 1892.

Home Mission contribution	\$ 9,000.00
Utah Mission	700.00
Jewish Mission	200.00
Immigrant Mission	150.00
Puerto Rico Mission	1,500.00
Conference Mission	400.00
Foreign Mission	4,500.00
Famine Relief, India	1,500.00
Hospital Site, India	2,000.00
Hospital Fund, India	4,000.00
Betty Nilsson, (Medical tuition)	300.00
Grand Total Contributions	\$ 24,250.00 ²⁴

²² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²³ *Augustana-synodens kvinnornas hem- och hednamissionsförenings silver jubileum, Kalender V*, p. 30.

²⁴ *These Fifty Years*, op. cit., p. 28.

When the Society celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1917, its membership had reached 14,000. It was supporting and maintaining doctors, teachers, missionaries, nurses, and evangelists on far-flung mission fields; boys and girls in China, India, and Puerto Rico were attending school on scholarships supplied by the Society. Hospitals and dispensaries had been built and were maintained in Rajahmundry, India, and Honanfu, China. An expanded program of activities was being planned for the near future which included a new high school for girls in China, a home for widows, a hospice for women evangelists, a dispensary, and a chapel, all for India. And within a few years the Society would encourage the Augustana Church to begin its own work in Africa.²⁵ A summary statement of projects and contributions covering the twenty-five years since its inception was rendered at the Jubilee convention of the Society giving an indication of the far-ranging program and the substantial support it received:

Contributions to Home Missions	\$ 65,294.09
Contributions to India Missions	46,908.47
Contributions to China Mission	17,700.75
Contributions to Puerto Rico, Mission	10,625.15
Contributions to Inner Mission	4,427.45
Contributions to Africa, Jewish, Persian Missions....	761.17
Patron and Protege Program	3,290.44
Miscellaneous Contributions	175.22
Promotion of Missions	17,077.36
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Grand Total Contributions	\$166,260.10
Cash on Hand	26,022.06
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Total	\$192,282.16 ²⁶

Although the Woman's Missionary Society was the largest and most extensive undertaking of the women of the Augustana Church, it was,

²⁵ The long-delayed decision which the Augustana Church finally made in 1905 to find its own field in China was indubitably due in no small part to the hope and expectation that the Woman's Missionary Society would undergird the work there with its powerful resources. And again, in 1917, when the Synod decided to begin its own program in Africa, this decision was supported by the knowledge that much help and encouragement would be forthcoming from the women of the Church. In these expectations the Church was not disappointed, for though the Woman's Missionary Society insisted at all times on running its own business in its own way and expected synodical authorities to keep hands off, the Society proved to be an indispensable helper wherever the needs of missions, at home or abroad, were voiced. See S. G. Hägglund, "The Woman's Missionary Society," *After Seventy-five Years*, op. cit., pp. 226ff. O. J. Johnson, "Our Missions Abroad," *Ibid.*, pp. 199ff. See also Swanson, *Foundation for Tomorrow*, op. cit.

²⁶ *Silfver jubileum, Kalender V*, op. cit., p. 15.

nevertheless, not the only means through which Augustana women sought to express their faith and serve their church. They also responded to the call and challenge of the *female diaconate*.

It was the Rev. Erik Alfred Fogelström, pastor of the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Omaha, Nebraska for many years, whom God used to issue the invitation to women to enroll in the Lutheran diaconate. Inspired by the examples of Theodore Fliedner, who had established a training center for the Christian diaconate at Kaiserswerth, Germany, and W. A. Passavant, who had brought the diaconate to the German churches of America, Fogelström came to feel that God was calling him to pioneer a similar work in the Augustana Church. This vision became Fogelström's "grand obsession," and he exerted every energy to realize this goal.²⁷

While the diaconate is more than a nursing service, a hospital furnishes the most appropriate context for its functioning, and therefore Fogelström was determined that a hospital must be founded as a base of operations for the diaconate. Accordingly, he organized, in January 1889, *The Evangelical Immanuel Association for Works of Mercy* with a board of trustees composed of wealthy citizens of Omaha who were interested in providing the city with a Protestant hospital since the one existing hospital in Omaha belonged to the Roman Catholic Church.²⁸ Fogelström promised the Association that when a hospital would be built, there would be deaconesses on hand to serve the sick. A sum of \$25,000 was soon subscribed locally, and plans for the new hospital were being drawn; but how would Fogelström redeem his promise regarding deaconesses? Where were they to be had? As if in direct answer to Fogelström's prayers, a young woman from his own Immanuel congregation, Bothilda Swensson, volunteered to enter the diaconate. In 1887 she was sent to the deaconess training center in Philadelphia, and in 1889 went to Sweden to complete her course of study. On April 19, 1891, having returned to Omaha, Bothilda Swensson was consecrated as the first deaconess in the Augustana Church. During the summer of 1888 four additional young women applied for entrance and were sent to Philadelphia to begin their studies.²⁹

Pastor Fogelström had entertained the fervent hope that the Augustana Synod would take over the diaconate project, as well as

²⁷ E. A. Fogelström, "Historik över Immanuel Hospital and Deaconess Institute, från dess första början," *Dorkas*, 1893, pp. 83ff.

²⁸ F. N. Swanberg, "Pastor Erik Alfred Fogelström," *Korsbaneret*, 1911, p. 136.

²⁹ Fogelström, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

the hospital. To this end he reported his activities to the synodical convention at Jamestown, New York, in 1890. To Fogelström's report the Synod gave the following response:

Because of our extensive missionary obligations, our sacrifices for our schools, colleges, children's homes, and other charitable institutions, the Augustana Synod cannot undertake the new enterprise of the diaconate. Nevertheless the Synod rejoices that Pastor Fogelström has initiated the diaconate in Omaha, Nebraska, and bespeaks upon this project the blessing of God.

Resolved, That the Synod shall elect a committee of five to cooperate with Pastor Fogelström in organizing the work of the diaconate.³⁰

Though the Synod had not adopted his project, it had encouraged the work, even though there were some who had vigorously opposed the entire venture.³¹ Encouraged by his friends and supporters, Fogelström pushed ahead; a sizable plot of ground was purchased for \$8,000 in the northwest section of Omaha, and the hospital building was soon under construction. On December 20, 1890, the Immanuel Hospital in Omaha, the headquarters of the diaconate in the Augustana Church, opened its doors.³²

Adjacent to the hospital a home for deaconesses was erected in 1891, and in April 1892, *The Immanuel Deaconess Association* was formed, the purpose of which was to "foster, train and send out deaconesses," and to promote the cause of the diaconate by enlisting interest and support.³³ The same year, a request for deaconess help came from the Bethesda Hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota. Sister Fredina Peterson was sent to St. Paul to head the nursing program on the condition that her relationship with the Mother House be kept inviolate.³⁴ Other "stations" served by the deaconesses, such as congregations and charitable institutions throughout the Church, were added to the list of beneficiaries of the Mother House in Omaha. Thus gradually the diaconate became known in the Augustana Church, and the sisters in their trim uniforms no longer created quite as great a stir of wonderment wherever they appeared.³⁵ In the meantime, the work at Bethesda Hospital, St. Paul, and the demand for more deaconess help grew to such proportions that Omaha could not supply the de-

³⁰ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1890, p. 26f., Resolution 8.

³¹ Fogelström, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 95f.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 107f; p. 119f.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 116f.

³⁵ P. M. Lindberg, "Augustana-synodens diakonissanstalter och sjukhus," *Minnesskrift*, *op. cit.*, p. 238f.

mand. Thus, the Minnesota Conference decided in 1902 to establish at Bethesda Hospital a second deaconess training center within the Augustana Church, in the hope that more young women in the Minnesota area could then be recruited for this vital service.³⁶ Therefore, while the Minnesota Conference took over the diaconate in Minnesota, the work in Omaha continued to be the private enterprise of Fogelström, with most of the cares and problems resting on his shoulders.

In the continuing hope that the Synod could be persuaded to adopt the whole program at Omaha, Fogelström repeatedly offered to turn the entire project over to the Church, if the Synod would guarantee its continuance. Year after year, however, the Synod rejected the offer with thanks to Fogelström for his work.³⁷ Finally, in 1903, after a lengthy study had been given to the entire matter, the Synod voted to accept the Omaha institution, and with it the diaconate program.³⁸ The following year at the Lindsborg convention *Articles of Incorporation of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute* and a *Constitution for Immanuel Deaconess Institute* were adopted.³⁹ Thus after fourteen years the diaconate finally came under the jurisdiction of the Augustana Synod, and was henceforth officially recognized as part of the program of the whole Synod. When the Augustana Church celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1910, the deaconess corps at Omaha numbered forty-three members, while a total of twenty-four were enrolled in the corps at St. Paul.⁴⁰

Although the number of deaconesses was never large—not nearly enough to satisfy the demand for their services—this corps of dedicated, unsalaried women made possible the establishment and maintenance of the greatest single institution of mercy in the Augustana Church, the Deaconess Institute at Omaha, with its hospital, its children's, invalid and old folks' homes. Moreover, they served in the letter and spirit of the constitution which defined a deaconess as "a servant of the Christian Church through tending and caring for the sick, the indigent, the imprisoned, and the little children. In this calling she is a servant of the Lord, and for His sake, a servant of the helpless, and of her fellow sisters in love."⁴¹

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 241ff.

³⁷ Fogelström's repeated appeals to Synod are recorded in the synodical minutes: 1894, p. 82f.; 1896, p. 67f.; 1901, p. 138f.; 1902, pp. 128ff., and 1903, pp. 97ff.

³⁸ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1903, pp. 97ff.

³⁹ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1904, pp. 95ff.

⁴⁰ Lindberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 238, 244.

⁴¹ Constitution, Article VIII, *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1904, p. 115. For a brief but excellent sketch covering the first fifty years of activity in the work

Reorganization of the Pension and Aid Fund

In 1865 the first death of an Augustana pastor, J. P. C. Boreen, occurred. This event confronted the Synod for the first time with the problem of providing a measure of relief for the survivors of a deceased pastor, whose small salary was inadequate to insure their future security.⁴² A committee was chosen to formulate recommendations for the establishment of a synodical aid fund for pastor's widows.⁴³ It was two years before the committee was ready to submit recommendations to the Synod. When it reported in 1867, the committee suggested that each pastor in the Synod should contribute one per cent of his salary to the fund, and congregations should give what they were able each year.⁴⁴ At the convention in Moline, Illinois, 1869, the Synod voted to add the aged and disabled pastors as beneficiaries of the program.⁴⁵

Thus, from the earliest years, the Augustana Church sought to provide a measure of aid to needy pastors' families. The affairs of the aid program were in a precarious state during these early years. Indeed, so little interest and support was given to it that in 1875 the Synod voted to wash its hands of the whole business, and turn the responsibility of caring for needy pastors' families over to the several conferences.⁴⁶ This unfortunate decision was revoked in 1878, when the Synod again assumed the responsibility for the aid program.⁴⁷

Though several attempts were made to place the pension and aid

of the Augustana diaconate, see Daniel Nystrom, "Augustana's Kaiserswerth," *My Church*, 1936, pp. 43-62. The recruitment of deaconess candidates has continually been a major problem. During the entire history of the movement in the Augustana Church, the average enrollment of new candidates has only been 3.4 a year. See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1958, p. 282. The difficulty of recruitment, coupled with the rapid rise in the cost of deaconess training and the expanding opportunities for the employment of women in other areas of activity, has contributed in the past thirty years to a steady decline in the Augustana diaconate. In 1930 the Bethesda Deaconess Home in St. Paul was discontinued and the half dozen remaining deaconesses transferred to Omaha. From that time the two remaining deaconess organizations have both been located in Nebraska, one at Axtell, in connection with Bethphage Mission, the other at Omaha. In the light of current developments in the Church, the Synod adopted in 1958 the recommendations of a special study committee which provided for a drastic revision of the deaconess program, discontinuing the "motherhouse system," and broadening the concept of the diaconate to include both male and female church vocations. The report is given in *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1958, pp. 279-300.

⁴² *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1865, p. 5.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴⁴ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1867, p. 12.

⁴⁵ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1869, p. 41.

⁴⁶ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1875, p. 32.

⁴⁷ *Protokoll*, 1878, p. 38.

on a sound footing, it was not until 1892 that a thorough overhauling of the entire project was finally undertaken. At the convention at Lindsborg, Kansas, 1892, new rules for the administration of this agency were adopted which provided that each pastor was to contribute one fourth of one per cent of his salary annually. Each congregation was to receive an annual offering for the fund. At the death of any pastor, all other pastors were to contribute one fourth of one per cent of their salaries and each congregation was to receive a special offering. The new rules stipulated that each pastor must fulfill his obligation to the fund, if he or his survivors were to benefit. The benefits were to be \$5.00 per week to disabled pastors, \$2.50 per week to pastors' widows, and \$1.00 per week for the support of each minor child under sixteen years of age. No family was to receive more than \$7.50 per week. If a widow remarried, she was to receive no more aid. And aid was to be given only where real need existed.⁴⁸

On the basis of several years' experience, the rules of 1892 were revised in 1898 to provide that each pastor was to contribute an annual sum of \$5.00, and at the death of any pastor, all other pastors were to contribute \$1.50 as a death benefit to the widow.⁴⁹ In 1900 the agency was incorporated as *The Augustana Ministerial Aid Fund*, and the rules and by-laws of the Fund were translated into English in 1913.⁵⁰

In order to strengthen this important agency and give it greater financial stability, the Synod at its Minneapolis convention in 1915, passed the following resolution:

That the Synod adopt as its goal for the next five years an ingathering for the Pension and Aid Fund, and that a committee of laymen be elected to supervise this ingathering; that the several conferences of the Augustana Synod be instructed to elect one layman for every two thousand communicant members as a member of the layman's committee to raise \$500,000 for the Ministerial Pension and Aid Fund, and that the committee be authorized to elect ten members at large.⁵¹

The laymen of the church took up this challenge and labored at the project until 1922 when they reported to Synod that the half-million dollars had been raised and the full amount handed over to the Board of the Pension Fund.⁵²

⁴⁸ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1892, pp. 75ff.

⁴⁹ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1898, p. 81.

⁵⁰ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1900, p. 63f.; 1913, p. 133f.

⁵¹ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1915, p. 150.

⁵² Titus A. Conrad, "The Augustana Pension and Aid Fund," *After Seventy-Five Years, 1860-1935*, op. cit., pp. 177ff.

Quite as significant as the huge sum of money which was gathered for the Pension Fund was the effect which this common effort had upon the laymen of the Augustana Church. Working together for a great common purpose, the laymen from various sections of the Church discovered a new unity as they were drawn together in this labor for the Church. This fact suggested to them the value of forming a permanent men's organization within the Augustana Church through which the men might express themselves and in unity serve the Christian cause. The initiative seems to have been taken by the men of the Iowa Conference where, in the spring of 1919, the *Augustana Lutheran Brotherhood of the Iowa Conference* was organized. This group petitioned the Synod that year to take action looking toward the formation of a synod-wide men's organization. The Synod responded by adopting a resolution declaring that

The Augustana Synod favors the organization of a synodical Brotherhood and that a committee be appointed to initiate and work out plans for such an organization and that the president of the Synod be ex-officio a member of the committee.⁵³

It took three years, however, before plans were perfected for the establishment of a Synodical Brotherhood. At the convention in St. Paul, Minnesota, 1922, the committee recommended that the Synod sanction the forming of a national men's organization. To this recommendation the Synod acceded and resolved that "the Synod advises the organization of a Brotherhood and also approves the proposed constitution."⁵⁴ An organization committee was elected, composed of representatives from each Conference, which met at once and effected a Brotherhood organization with a full staff of officers.⁵⁵

Thus, the numerous local and several conference men's organizations throughout the Augustana Church were federated into a larger, more purposeful unity. The goals for which the new agency was to strive were set forth in Article II of the Brotherhood constitution, declaring that it was the purpose of this organization to promote:

1. The unity of the men of the Augustana Synod.
2. The spiritual and material welfare and activities of the Augustana Synod.
3. An appreciation of the privileges and obligations of church membership.

⁵³ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1919, p. 155.

⁵⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1922, pp. 190ff.

⁵⁵ John A. Christianson, "The Augustana Brotherhood," *After Seventy-Five Years, 1860-1935*, op. cit., pp. 244ff.

4. A clear conception of Christian stewardship.
5. Efforts to interest and support young men in the preparation for the office of the Holy Ministry, and to sustain the pastor in carrying on his work.
6. The development of the educational and charitable institution within the Augustana Synod.
7. The affiliation when desirable with other Lutheran organizations in furthering projects of common interest to the Lutheran Church at large.
8. Such other undertakings as may from time to time be sponsored by the Augustana Synod.⁵⁶

The formation of the Brotherhood may be said to have marked the last and somewhat tardy stages of the period of transition and adjustment. By the time the Brotherhood came into being the major need was not new service agencies in the church, but new and more adequate ways and means of applying the resources of the various religious agencies to the burgeoning needs of a new era. Nevertheless, the formation of the Brotherhood completed an important phase of development in the Augustana Church. Henceforth, all of the constituent elements of the Synod, men, women and youth, would be enabled to witness and serve through the medium of their own particular agency.

The Role of the Augustana Layman

The activity of the Augustana layman in connection with the financial campaign for the Pension Fund is symbolic of the important part which laymen have taken in the affairs of the Augustana Church from the very beginning. To be sure, the story of Augustana cannot be identified or interpreted primarily as a lay movement; the reins of leadership since the early days of Esbjörn and Hasselquist have been firmly held by the clergy. Nevertheless, in every period of its development the Augustana Church has been enriched and strengthened through the service rendered by laymen.

In the pioneer period the initiative in getting religious work started and congregations organized in the scattered settlements was often taken by laymen. The reports of the traveling missionaries sent out by the Synod testify to the encouragement and invaluable help which was given by these pious lay folk who hungered for the Bread of Life. Indeed, it may be said that virtually every congregation in

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

the Augustana Church records the all-but-forgotten names of lay folk whose unselfish devotion and sacrificial spirit were the earthly means through which God worked to establish his Church in that community.

Laymen have not only served as ministerial helpers, however. They have often been licensed by the Synod as preachers and evangelists with quasiministerial standing. While the Augustana Church has not made use of lay preachers to the extent that some other church bodies have, and while the Augustana clergy has traditionally exercised careful supervision over this practice, the Synod has utilized lay preachers throughout its history simply to meet a very real need. For the lay preacher may be said to symbolize two important aspects of Augustana history, namely, the perennial shortage of ordained men, and the readiness of laymen to serve their church.

The Synod, to be sure, sought until 1932 to relieve the pressure of ministerial shortage by permitting older and more mature men to register at the Seminary for a so-called "minimum course" and to be subsequently ordained as "hospitants." But even so the Synod found it necessary to call upon laymen for help and send them forth with a license to preach and teach.⁵⁷

Though the use of lay preachers, and indeed, the ordination of "hospitants," were looked upon as "emergency measures," the Synod chose this course of action in preference to ignoring the religious plight of congregations which could not obtain ministerial help. A considerable number of Augustana congregations owe their very existence to the humble ministry of lay preachers who served the Church often for meager remuneration and under difficult circumstances.

In the general work of the Church lay participation has also prevailed from the very beginning. The polity of the Augustana Church and its conferences, as delineated in the various constitutions under which the Synod has functioned, has provided for equal lay and clerical representation.⁵⁸ This means that in the affairs of the Augustana Church and its conferences, at the annual conventions, on official boards, commissions and committees, the laity of the Church has had a voice in establishing policy and in developing and implementing

⁵⁷ See Arden, *School of the Prophets*, *op. cit.*, 192ff. The "minimum course" did not require graduation from college as a seminary entrance requirement, and also omitted courses in Greek and Hebrew. "Hospitants" were those who fulfilled only the minimum requirements for seminary graduation and ordination.

⁵⁸ See Constitutions, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1860, p. 16f.; 1879, p. 60f.; 1894, p. 82f.; 1921, p. 153f.; 1948, p. 356f.

programs of activity. The four service agencies in which laymen have been particularly active have been Augustana Churchmen, Stewardship and Finance, Audio-Visual, and Church Architecture.⁵⁹

In no single area of the church's life have laymen had a greater share or rendered a more significant service than in the field of Christian higher education. Except for the dedicated services of devoted laymen not a single educational institution under Augustana sponsorship would have been possible. In addition to all the unknown lay folk who have contributed generously, and often sacrificially, to found and maintain the church-related colleges, Augustana gratefully recalls the names of many outstanding lay people who served as faculty, staff and board members. The honor roll of Augustana College would include the names of A. O. Bersell, A. W. Williamson, Joshua Lindahl, J. A. Udden, C. L. Esbjörn, Andrew Kempe, Olof Grafstrom, Edla Lund, W. E. Cederberg, I. M. Anderson, Claude W. Foss, J. P. Magnusson, Carl Fryxell, Linus Kling, and Mrs. K. T. Anderson.⁶⁰ The honor roll of Gustavus Adolphus College would bear the names of Edwin J. Vickner, E. C. Carlton, Conrad Peterson, Inez Rundstrom, J. A. Edquist and C. E. Sjostrand as outstanding faculty and staff members, while honored board members would include Henry M. Benson, Sr., Roy A. Hendrickson, H. P. Linner, and Carl Jackson. On the roll of honor of Bethany College the following names would be inscribed, Hagbard Brase, Birger Sandzén, Walter Fahrner, Anna Carlson, Emil A. Deere and J. E. Wallin.⁶¹ The honor roll of Upsala College would enshrine the names of Frans A. Erickson and Karl J. Olson as outstanding faculty and staff members, while a list of noteworthy board members would include the names of Clarence J. Anderson and Dr. Roy W. Johnson. The honor roll of Luther College, Wahoo,

⁵⁹ Significant leadership has been given to the *Augustana Churchmen*, formerly known as the Augustana Brotherhood, by Judge Eskil C. Carlson, Mr. John A. Christianson, Dr. J. A. Christenson, Mr. Arthur E. Wanfelt, Mr. N. A. Nelson, and Mr. K. T. Anderson. Mr. Carl H. Jacobson was executive secretary of Augustana Lutheran Churchmen from 1957 to 1962. In the *Department of Stewardship and Finance*, Mr. Otto Leonardson began his services as a staff member in 1928, and Mr. Sam Edwins in 1955. Mr. Bruce Siford, his son Roger, and Mr. Paul Wychor have staffed the *Department of Audio-Visual Service* for most of its fifteen-year history. The *Department of Church Architecture and Building Finance* has been ably served by Mr. E. F. MacMillen, Mr. Gordon Storaasli and Mr. Milton A. Hallet.

⁶⁰ Dr. Gustav Andreen, who succeeded Dr. Olof Olsson as president of Augustana College and Theological eminary, served in that capacity as a layman from 1901 to 1905. He was ordained in 1905. In 1962 a layman, Clarence Woodrow Sorensen, was called to succeed The Rev. Conrad Bergendoff as president of Augustana College.

⁶¹ Two laymen, Emory K. Lindquist and Robert Mortvedt, have occupied the president's office at Bethany in recent years.

Nebraska, would record the names of S. M. Hill, ordained in 1917, after many years as a lay preacher, Julius and Augusta Flodman, N. P. Hult, John Erickson and S. O. Johnson. These members of Augustana laity, and others like them, have made Augustana higher education possible.

Closely related to education has been the "Boys' Work Program," which was initiated by laymen and sponsored by the synodical men's organization, the Augustana Brotherhood and Churchmen. In 1926 the Brotherhood selected one of its most able members, Mr. Eskil C. Carlson, an attorney and former municipal judge of Des Moines, Iowa, to work out a program which the Brotherhood could sponsor on behalf of boys.⁶² To help him in this assignment Mr. Carlson chose a committee of two laymen, Mr. Oscar W. Sjogren, professor at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, and Mr. C. W. Erlandson, secretary of the Y.M.C.A. at St. Paul, Minnesota, and two pastors, Rev. Joshua Odén of Chicago and Rev. Victor E. Beck of Fort Dodge, Iowa.⁶³ This committee drew up a plan called "The Christian Citizenship Program," based upon a similar program of the Y.M.C.A. The plan provided for a three-fold division of activities according to age groups. "The Friendly Indians" was geared to boys under 12 years of age; "Pioneers" was meant for boys between the ages of 12 to 15 years, and "Comrades" for youth 15 to 18 years of age. The purpose of this threefold program was to provide wholesome, character-building activity for boys, supervised and controlled by the church, and directed toward definitely Christian goals and values.⁶⁴

The Augustana Brotherhood approved "The Christian Citizenship Program" and pledged moral and financial backing. Local brotherhoods were urged to organize a Boys' Program in their own parish, and for a while enthusiasm ran high in favor of this kind of boys' activity, with a number of local chapters being started. On the whole, however, "The Christian Citizenship Program" cannot be said to have received universal acceptance throughout the Augustana Church. Instead, the Boy Scout program, with a strong church orientation, began about 1930 to find increasing favor among Augustana congregations. Since the Brotherhood and its Boys' Committee were interested in promoting any constructive, church-centered activity for boys which

⁶² See letter from Carlson to Pastor Victor E. Beck, July 12, 1926, *File on Boys' Work*, Library of Dr. Victor E. Beck.

⁶³ See letter to committee, October 25, 1926, *File*, *op. cit.*

⁶⁴ In an article entitled "A Boys' Program of the Lutheran Brotherhood," which appeared in the *Lutheran Companion*, October 8, 1932, Judge Carlson described the activities and purposes of the program.

found general favor, a gradual transition to the scouting program eventuated.⁶⁵ The transition from "The Christian Citizenship Program" to the Boy Scout program was guided and directed by the Boys' Work Committee which prepared suitable program materials and techniques for a smooth transition and for a more widespread adoption of the Boy Scout program throughout the Church. By 1940 this program had become the chief boys' program of the Brotherhood and of the Augustana Church.

Although the work with boys had been initiated by laymen and continued under the sponsorship of the Brotherhood, the clergy of the Augustana Church also gave its co-operation and endorsement. From 1933 to 1940, Dr. Victor E. Beck was chairman of the Boys' Committee, guiding the program in its transition period. Dr. Beck was succeeded by another Augustana clergyman, Pastor Frans A. Victorson, who headed the work from 1940 until the merger in 1962, and distinguished himself as a leader in the church-related Scouting program both in his own Church and on the national level. Pastor Victorson has served as national chaplain at two nation-wide scout Jamborees,⁶⁶ and has prepared program material for the *Pro Deo et Patria* and Lamb awards. The extent to which the Boys' Work program has been accepted in the Augustana Church is reflected in the fact that by 1960 approximately one out of every three Augustana congregations sponsored a Boy Scout troop, and in the year 1961-1962, the highest award of scouting, *Pro Deo et Patria*, in recognition of outstanding service to church and high achievement in Sunday school and public school, was granted to 169 sons of Augustana. The Lamb award, given to adults in recognition for outstanding service to youth, was presented to four men.⁶⁷

One of the most significant assignments, however, which the Augustana Church has ever given to its laity was initiated in 1946, when the Synod revised its practice of issuing calls to candidates for ordination. A special *Committee on Examination and Placement of Candidates for Ordination* was created that year, composed of the clerical synodical officers, the conference presidents, the theological faculty, and six members-at-large, including three pastors and three laymen elected by the Synod for four-year terms.⁶⁸ Since 1946 this

⁶⁵ Girl Scouting has also been approved by the church, but has not received as great popular support as the Boy Scout program.

⁶⁶ Lutheran Chaplain General in the 1950 Jamboree at Valley Forge, and Protestant Chaplain General in 1957 at Valley Forge.

⁶⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1962, p. 356.

⁶⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1946, p. 338f

committee has held colloquium with every individual applying for ordination into the Augustana Church, thus carefully screening the applicants for ordination and reception into the Augustana ministerium, and thereupon placing those who are accepted in their first field of service. Not only is this practice an unusual demonstration of democratic procedure in a Church of long ecclesiastical tradition; it is also a dramatic evidence of the important place which the layman has occupied in the Augustana Church, sharing with the ministerium the great responsibility of exercising the prerogative of determining who may be ordained, as well as deciding where each new pastor shall first serve the Church.

Finally, The Augustana layman has played an important part in the development of an ecumenical mood and spirit within the Synod. Indeed, it may be asserted that the most insistent pressures for Christian unity have come from the laity rather than the clergy of the Synod. As the people of the Augustana Church gradually shed their earlier immigrant spirit and attitudes and integrated with their American neighbors in the communities where they lived and worked, they discarded the old spirit of isolation and demanded of their church an increasing measure of community consciousness and leadership. It was the layman, rather than the clergyman, who first became impatient with the extravagance in terms of both men and means which the competitiveness of disunity and isolationism involved. The theological particularism which often seemed important to the theologically trained clergyman, did not appear to be important enough to stand as a barrier to a spirit of mutuality and co-operation in the estimation of the more practical layman. It is important to note that the first constitution adopted by the Augustana Brotherhood in 1922, explicitly stated that one of the fundamental purposes of the synodical organization for men was the promotion of "the affiliation when desirable with other Lutheran organizations in furthering projects of common interest to the Lutheran Church at large."⁶⁹ Each time the Synod decided to take steps in the direction of Christian unity and co-operation, it has found its laymen ready to assist and participate.

At the time of the final consolidation of the Augustana Church into the *Lutheran Church in America* in 1962, laymen were substantially represented on the various committees and commissions through which the Augustana Church expressed its ecumenical concern. Two of the four Augustana councilors in the National Lutheran

⁶⁹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1926, pp. 281-283, revised edition.

Council were laymen, one of whom also served as the secretary of the Council and therefore as a member of its executive committee.⁷⁰ The Commission on Ecumenical Relations, composed of thirteen members, who also served as the Augustana representative on the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity, included four laymen.⁷¹ Among the twenty-four members representing the Augustana Church in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., seven were from the laity.⁷²

Thus, it is evident that throughout the history of the Augustana Church the layman has been no mere spectator. He has been an active, fully responsible participant in every phase of the work of his Church. He has fully matched the devotion and sacrificial spirit of his pastor, and not infrequently has led the way in bold, imaginative action. Whatever, therefore, may have been the accomplishments of the Augustana Church, pastor and layman share equally the credit. By the same token, equal responsibility must be shared for whatever may have been the failures and shortcomings of Augustana.

The Jubilee of 1910

If a single event may be described as a moment of transition, when one era comes to an end and another begins, when one period glides, so to speak, over into a distinctly different epoch, such a moment was the Jubilee of 1910.

The Augustana Church was fifty years old that year, and the celebration held on the campus of Augustana College and Theological Seminary in Rock Island, Illinois, was in some respects the most unforgettable event in the history of the Synod. It was unforgettable because the whole mood, while mindful of the past, was so thoroughly forward looking. The dominant keynote might be expressed in the phrase, "The past is prologue." It was unforgettable because the pioneer past with its hardships and sufferings was still near enough at hand to make the contrast with the abundant present dramatically

⁷⁰ The laymen were Mr. Harold LeVander, South St. Paul, Minnesota, and Dr. Robert Holmen, St. Paul, Minnesota. Mr. LeVander was secretary of the Council. *Augustana Annual*, 1962, p. 148.

⁷¹ The laymen on this important commission were, Mr. Wallace Anderson, Cranston, R. I., Dr. Robert Holmen, St. Paul, Minnesota, Dr. C. W. Sorensen, Rock Island, Illinois, and Attorney S. T. Anderson, Denver, Colorado, *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁷² Lay representatives were Mr. Bruce Johnson, Mr. Carl Jacobson, Mr. Sam Edwins, Mr. Carl A. Swenson, Mrs. Bernard Spong, Mrs. Carl W. Segerhammar and Miss Janice Bowman, *Ibid.*, p. 149.

real. It was unforgettable because the Augustana Synod had not yet learned to take its blessings for granted, but beheld the goodness of God with the starry-eyed wonder of children.

And what wonders God had wrought in a half century! In 1860 the Swedish section of the Augustana Synod had been composed of seventeen pastors and thirty-six congregations with a total membership of 3,747.⁷³ A half century later this mustard seed had grown to a widespread community numbering 625 pastors who served 1,124 congregations with a communicant membership of 166,983. The Synod operated ten schools with a total student enrollment of 3,153. It had established and was maintaining eight children's homes, three hospitals, two deaconess centers, two immigrant homes, five homes for the aged, five hospices for young women, and one inner mission home. A home missions program was being carried out which reached into thirty-one states, Alaska, and three Canadian provinces. A foreign missions enterprise maintained a full score of missionaries in India, China, and Puerto Rico. All of this Christian activity had demanded a financial budget for the previous year of \$1,767,204. The Synod had come a long way in fifty years, and the Jubilee was an occasion of joy and thanksgiving.⁷⁴

To seat the 391 clerical and 310 lay delegates registered for the convention,⁷⁵ together with the hundreds of visitors who poured into Rock Island by special trains from Minnesota and Kansas, a large, wooden temporary hall had been erected in "Ericson Park," just across Seventh avenue, north of Old Main. In this spacious, oven-like building, with its row upon row of hard, uncomfortable wooden seats, the convention and festival sections were held for ten consecutive days. The chief host, general handy man, official greeter and genial master of ceremonies, and the man who seemed to be all over the place at once, was the president of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, Dr. Gustav Andreen. Never had Augustana entertained a more distinguished company of guests. Most impressive was the short and stocky Bishop of Visby, Commander of the Order of the North Star with the Great Cross, Doctor of Theology, Philosophy, and Jurisprudence, Knut Henning Gezelius von Schéele, representing His Royal Majesty, King Oscar II, and the Church of Sweden; the Very Reverend Pehr Pehrson of Gothenburg, secretary of the Swedish

⁷³ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1860, Kyrklig statistik.

⁷⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1910, Kyrklig statistik, Appendix.

⁷⁵ The convention of 1910 allowed plenary representation, one pastor and one layman from each congregation.

Ministerium and representing the clergy of the Swedish Church; the Rev. Efraim Rang, representing the National Evangelical Foundation (Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen); the Honorable Adolph O. Eberhart, governor of Minnesota; Dr. Theodore E. Schmauk, President and representative of the General Council; Dr. Henry E. Jacobs, representing the Lutheran Synods of the eastern section of U.S.A.; Dr. J. K. Nikander, President and representative of the Suomi Synod; Dr. H. G. Stub, vice-president and representative of the Norwegian Synod; the Rev. Gerhard Rasmussen, representing the United Norwegian Synod; the Rev. L. Harrisville, representing the Norwegian Hauge Synod; Professor P. S. Vig, representing the Danish Lutheran Church; Dr. F. Richter, President and representative of the German Iowa Synod; Dr. G. Theodore Benze, President of Thiel College and representing the Pittsburgh Synod; the Rev. A. H. Arbaugh, President and representative of the Chicago Synod; the Rev. Albert J. Reichart, President and representative of the Synod of the Northwest, and Dr. W. H. Blancke, representing the General Synod.⁷⁶

Scores of greetings, well-wishes, and felicitations were received from Europe and America, including communications from His Majesty, Oscar II, King of Sweden, and the Honorable William Howard Taft, President of the United States. Virtually all of these greetings took note of the progress of the past and voiced the confident hope that an even greater future lay ahead. This theme of confidence in God's guidance in the future ran like a red thread through most of the speeches, sermons, and addresses that were given.⁷⁷

It was apparent, however, that whatever the future might hold, the destinies of the Synod must be given over to younger hands than those which had guided its affairs in the past. In the years immediately preceding the Jubilee a dramatic change in leadership had taken place, as one by one the pioneers had stepped out of the line of march. Dr. Matthias Wahlstrom, president of Gustavus Adolphus College, had retired in 1904; that same year the Synod had been shocked by the sudden and unexpected death of Dr. Carl A. Swensson, president of Bethany College; Dr. L. H. Beck, the founding father of Upsala College, resigned in 1910; and the untimely passing of the great Olof Olsson in 1900 was still a fresh memory in the minds of many.

But the Jubilee itself furnished the most dramatic symbol of the passing of the old and the challenge to the young. It happened on the

⁷⁶ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1910, guest list, p. 26.

⁷⁷ A number of these addresses are given in full in *Minnen från jubelfesten, 1910*, Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, 1910.

evening of the very first day of the Jubilee, the exact anniversary date of the founding of the Synod, June 5. It was Sunday evening and the session was dedicated to "Augustana Pioneers," a service honoring the past.

In the presence of the vast audience gathered in Jubilee Hall, the oldest members in attendance assembled on the broad platform. Dr. Andreen was in charge of the program and spoke of the sacrificial labors of the founding fathers and mothers. Then Dr. Nils Forsander, the oldest individual to have served as the synodical secretary, arose and called the names of all those who were present at the constituting convention a half century earlier, June 5, 1860, in Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin. The scene that followed has been described by an eye-witness as follows:

As the great audience sat in breathless silence the roll call began. Name after name was called without a response being heard. It was well-nigh impossible to escape the impression that each name was being borne upward, higher and higher, until it reached another listening multitude—"the great white flock"—and up there a jubilant—but for us unheard—response was given—"Yes! Yes! We are with you!" It is difficult to say which was the more gripping, the silence after each name was called or the three responses—only three—which were given by the sole survivors, Dr. Eric Norelius, Dr. Peters, and Mr. Erlander from Rockford. . . . Then Dr. Norelius, president of the Church and one of the pioneer founders, led the other two forward to the front of the platform, and the entire assembly rose like one man to its feet in a spontaneous gesture of honor and love. And then Dr. Norelius spoke: "Here before you stands what is left of the first Synod. Pastor Peters, he is blind and cannot see any of you in the vast congregation. And here is Mr. Erlander, he is deaf and cannot hear a single word of this great jubilee celebration. And here I stand, apparently well preserved, but aware that the end is not far off." Under the deepest emotion the congregation began to sing the old hymn,

"The Mountains may fall
And the hills be removed
But my steadfast love
Remaineth forever."⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Gustav Andreen, "Ekon från jubelfesten," *Prairieblomman*, 1911, Rock Island, pp. 152ff.

Americanization of Augustana

THE AUGUSTANA SYNOD met for its fifty-second annual convention, June 14-20, 1911, in the city of Duluth, Minnesota, and it proved to be a memorable occasion. First of all, Duluth was farther north than any other city in which the Synod had hitherto assembled. And the delegates enjoyed the unique experience of bundling up against the chilling breezes blowing off Lake Superior, while reading in the newspapers the reports of stifling heat in Chicago, Omaha, and Lindsborg. Moreover, the delegates would not soon forget the impressive sight of cargo ships coming in and out of the Great Lakes port of Duluth-Superior, loaded with iron ore from the Mesabi range, and bound for the steel furnaces of Gary and Pittsburgh.¹

The experience, however, which most of the delegates would doubtless remember longer and more vividly than any other occurred on the afternoon of the first day of the business sessions. It was the moment, following the election of new synodical officers, when the venerable Dr. Eric Norelius, president of the Synod since 1899, and now at the age of seventy-eight, the last living link with the pioneer past, handed the gavel of the president's office to his successor, Dr. Lawrence A. Johnston, who would serve in this office until his death in 1918.

Because of his wife's critical illness and his own indisposition, Dr. Norelius asked to be excused from the remainder of the convention sessions so that he could return home. As he bade farewell to the delegation, bespoke God's blessings upon his younger successor in office, and then slowly left the assembly, the delegates were aware that they were witnessing a historic moment—the passing of an old order and the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the Augustana Synod. The departure of Dr. Norelius led the editor of Augustana, Dr. L. G. Abrahamson, to observe:

What immense changes these last years have wrought among us! None of the pioneer fathers are longer with us. . . . It is

¹ *Augustana*, June 22, 1911.

certain that the Synod has entered a new and important period of development. . . . The sons of the pioneers are being challenged to prove their mettle, and to show how well they have preserved the precious heritage they have received from faithful parents.²

The changes in synodical personnel to which the editor of *Augustana* called attention were indeed noteworthy. But they were only signs and symbols of a deeper, more subtle, but nonetheless significant change in the temper and mold of the Augustana Synod which was taking place and would continue to develop, due to the process known as *Americanization*. And the real challenge to the new generation was whether or not the faith of the fathers could endure and retain its essential lineaments while subjected to the strain of cultural and intellectual transposition.

The Meaning of Americanization

The term "Americanization" has been given a wide variety of definitions. Some have seen it as the process by which American patterns of thought and action have been imposed upon immigrants in this country. Others have seen it as the assimilation of the American ethos by newcomers to these shores; while still others have thought of Americanization as in some sense a process of acculturation in which through mutual cross-fertilization, the immigrant and American cultural traditions have produced a new cultural synthesis which is at once both like and unlike the old.³ While these definitions may indeed describe some phases or aspects of the Americanization of the Augustana Synod, perhaps it is sufficient to define the process simply as the way in which the Synod yielded to internal and external pressures to divest itself of many of its essentially Swedish characteristics in becoming an indigenous American institution.

In the light of this broad definition of Americanization, it is evident that the process cannot be limited to any single period or era in the Synod's history. From the earliest beginnings the Americanization of the Augustana Church has been an almost continuous de-

² *Augustana*, June 29, 1911.

³ The various phases of Americanization in relation to the Swedish immigrant are discussed in two unpublished doctoral dissertations: Oscar A. Benson, *Problems in the Accommodation of the Swede to American Culture*, op. cit., Gene Jessie Lund, *The Americanization of the Augustana Lutheran Church*, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, 1954.

velopment. There have, however, been times when the process has been more pronounced than at others.

During the first half-century of the history of the Synod there were a number of readily apparent factors which encouraged the process of Americanization. In the first place, the physical fact of being transplanted from a European situation to an American environment, from a state church with its old, cherished and conservative traditions, to a free, pluralistic, and competitive society with almost no religious traditions, demanded a considerable adjustment. Both pastors and laymen in the early years soon discovered that the voluntary principle in America made church work here a far different enterprise from the one they were accustomed to in Sweden. Their new environment, moreover, demanded quick accommodation, and thus the direction of adjustment was toward conformity to American practice.

In the second place, the early leaders of Augustana were not isolationists, hoping to insulate their people against American influences so as to perpetuate a Swedish ethos, or repristinate the Swedish Church on American soil. Indeed, L. P. Esbjörn, T. N. Hasselquist, Erland Carlsson, and Eric Norelius were unanimous in their conviction that the Swedish people ought to identify themselves with their new American home, to become good and loyal American citizens, and that Swedish usage, language, and custom must not become ends in themselves, but must be merely the means for more effective recruitment and retention of Scandinavians as members of the Lutheran Church in America.⁴

In the third place, the various relationships and associations which the early pastors and their congregations established with existing American groups helped them to accommodate to American usage, thought, and action. For example, the association of Esbjörn and Hasselquist with the *American Home Missionary Society* brought them their first specific instructions regarding the conduct of church work on the American frontier. Such instructions constituted the earliest orientation and guidance in American church usage which the Swedish immigrants received. The association of the Scandinavians with the *Synod of Northern Illinois* was a further and most fruitful introduction of the Swedes to the ways of an American

⁴ See Hasselquist in *Hemlandet*, June 22, 1858; letter from Hasselquist to J. A. Seiss, June 29, 1861, *Hasselquist Collection*, Augustana Archives; letter from Esbjörn to Norelius, Chicago, May 22, 1863 in *Tidskrift*, 1899, p. 337f. See also Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 423. Ander, *Hasselquist, op. cit.*, pp. 228ff.

church. Here they learned much concerning both parliamentary procedures and polity structure.⁵ An even broader contact with American life and thought was opened to the pastors and people of the Augustana Synod when they affiliated with the *General Council*. Within this fellowship Augustana not only identified itself with the median school of Lutheranism in America,⁶ but it also became a working partner with the oldest and most Americanized branch of the Lutheran Church in this country, namely, the churches of the Muhlenberg tradition. Through this association the Synod received deep and permanent influences in various phases of its life and work: in its experience of worship through use of the General Council's English Hymnal and Service Book; in its home missions program through co-operation in English missions, and in foreign missions by learning the ways and means of conducting overseas missions by participating in the foreign program of the Council.⁷

At the level of the individual members of the Synod, the process of Americanization was apparent from the very earliest years. Indeed, it may be said that Americanization was already under way when the would-be immigrant began to dream about America, and laid his plans for leaving the old homeland. And after arriving on these shores he quickly followed the old maxim, "When in Rome do as the Romans do." The Swede was eager to pick up American manners and adopt American customs. In fact, sociological studies have generally agreed that the Swedish immigrant has been one of the most easily assimilated segments of the immigrant population in the United States. "Not at all inclined to establish permanent colonies isolated from other groups, the Swedes have very rapidly submerged their peculiar traits and have adopted the customs and attitudes of those about them with remarkable eagerness."⁸ As he associated with neighbors and friends in the "American melting pot," the Swede adjusted so readily to his new environment that he often claimed to have forgotten his old mother tongue before he had learned to speak English, and as a consequence his speech was often a curious, almost unintelligible mixture of Swedish and English, popularly known as "*rotvålska*." He also intermarried with those of different cultural backgrounds. In such unions, the uniquely Swedish traditions and customs usually receded into the background or were forgotten altogether. And when the children of

⁵ Norelius, *De svenska luterska församlingarnas*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 814f.

⁶ *Supra*, Chapter VIII, p. 143f.

⁷ See essay by C. A. Blomgren, "The Union of the Augustana Synod with the General Council," *The Augustana Synod, 1860-1910*, op. cit., pp. 215ff.

⁸ Oscar A. Benson, op. cit., p. 111.

the immigrants enrolled in the American public schools, learning to think, speak, and act like Americans, they brought their influence to bear upon their homes and families.⁹

Thus, from the very earliest beginnings of the Augustana Synod, the process of Americanization may be said to have been operative. The era, however, in which it became most pronounced and accelerated, and its effects most apparent, was the period of approximately a decade and a half, from about 1910 to 1925. When the aged Norelius at the Duluth convention in 1911 stepped down from the presidency and made room for his successor, Dr. Lawrence Albert Johnston, his departure from synodical leadership symbolized the development that was taking place. Johnston was himself a representative of the new era; he was the first president of the Augustana Synod to be born in America. Henceforth, the office of synodical president would never again be held by a man born in Sweden. Johnston, a native of Sugar Grove, Pennsylvania, and a product of American schools, had reached the age of fifty-five years when he was elected to the presidency of the Church. Though highly regarded for his fine Christian character and dignified demeanor, he was not a great leader nor a strong administrator, and his election seems to have been due in no small measure to his ability to express himself fluently in both Swedish and English. As president of the Synod he could represent all factions of the Synod in this period of transition.¹⁰

It is important to note at this point that the increased tempo of Americanization during the seven years of Johnston's administration coincided with the decrease of immigration for the same period. This suggests that as long as the Synod was being regularly supplied with fresh transfusions of Swedish blood through immigration, the process of Americanization was held in check. But when immigration began to diminish, the effects of Americanization increased proportionately.

There were a number of reasons for the decrease of immigration. By 1900-1905 the industrialization of Sweden had reached the point where gainful employment in the burgeoning cities of Sweden could be found without much difficulty. Thus, the earlier economic motiva-

⁹ Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 425. For a discussion of the problem of estrangement between immigrant parents and Americanized children see M. L. Hanson, "The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant," *Augustana Historical Society Publications*, Vol. VIII, Part I, Rock Island, Illinois, 1938.

¹⁰ In the biographical sketches of L. A. Johnston given by his contemporaries, his bilingual abilities are stressed. *Korsbaneret*, 1919, pp. 157-165; *Augustana*, June 29, 1911; *Augustana*, June 20, 1918; *Lutheran Companion*, June 22, 1918.

tion for emigrating was less compelling than in an earlier day.¹¹ At the same time public opinion as well as the government of Sweden were beginning to take vigorous steps to discourage emigration and encourage Swedish citizens to remain at home and make their contribution to the building of a better modern Sweden. To this end the government undertook a thorough-going study of all phases of emigration and immigration, so that action might be based on knowledge and fact instead of guesswork and prejudices. The results of this great project was the publication of the *Emigrationsutredningen*, edited by Gustaf Sundberg between the years 1908-1913¹² A more popular project originated in the city of Gothenburg in 1903, when a group of patriotic and public-spirited citizens laid the ground work for the formation of the *National Society Opposed to Emigration* (Nationalföreningen mot emigrationen), which was formally established in 1907, operating under a charter approved by the government and supported by a government grant.¹³

Those who sought to discourage emigration exerted every effort to paint a picture of America in the darkest possible colors. It was asserted that the United States was no longer the land of unbounded opportunity. Stories were told and printed in the newspapers about Swedish emigrants who had left Sweden in high hopes, only to find in the United States a life of poverty, suffering, hardship, and disillusionment. The American panic of 1907 gave the antiemigration forces ample grist for their mills, and they gleefully pointed to the thousands of Americans who were out of work, and repeated with embellishments tales of hunger, homelessness, and illness alleged to prevail in the large industrial centers of America.¹⁴

Due not to one, but to a combination of circumstances in both Sweden and America, the stream of immigration which reached a twentieth-century high of 43,487 in 1903, declined sharply thereafter, so that by 1908 it had dropped to 8,466, and by 1915 to a little more

¹¹ *Emigrationsutredningen*, Bilaga IV, pp. 122ff., see especially Table 34.

¹² *Emigrationsutredningen* includes twenty-one volumes and is the most comprehensive study ever made of Swedish emigration and immigration.

¹³ Theodor Mügge, *Nationalföreningen mot emigrationen*. Program 1907-1915; Stadgar 1907-1915, Stockholm, 1907-1917. Adrian Molin, *Några ord om nationalföreningen mot emigrationen-sällskapet hem i Sverige*, Stockholm, 1932. Henry von Kraemer, *Ett ord till amerikafararen*. Flygblad utgifvet av Nationalföreningen mot emigration, Stockholm, 1909.

¹⁴ See for example T. W. Schönberg, *Sanningen om Amerika*, Stockholm, 1909; Henry von Kraemer, *op. cit.*

than 2,500. During the years of World War I, 1917-1918, immigration to the United States was virtually halted.¹⁵

After the war, the Congress of the United States bowed to pressure from union labor forces which feared the competition of cheap labor from new immigration. Accordingly, in the spring of 1921, Congress passed an emergency immigration act, setting up a quota system: immigrants from any country could not exceed three per cent of the number of persons of their nationality residing in the United States in 1910. Although this action decreased the incoming number of immigrants by about two thirds, the pressure groups were still not satisfied. Thus, Congress in 1924 enacted the National Origins Act, which not only banned the people of East Asia entirely, but set a quota of two per cent for Europe on the basis of the census of 1890.¹⁶ The quota law of 1924 reduced Sweden's annual immigrant allotment to 9,561, and in 1929 further restrictive legislation was enacted which cut this allotment to 3,000.¹⁷

The decrease in immigration was involved in the process of Americanization of the Augustana Synod in several respects. In the first place, it encouraged a broader sense of community. It must be borne in mind that the Synod had from the very beginning conceived its chief task and responsibility to be that of winning for the Church the great masses of incoming Swedish immigrants. During the period when these immigrants were entering the United States by the tens of thousands each year, year after year, Augustana faced a staggering task which demanded all its available resources and energies. But when the stream of immigration was reduced to a mere trickle, the Synod began to look beyond the shrinking circle of Swedish immigrants, and became increasingly aware of a larger community mission field. It began to address its message to others besides the immigrants. As a result, here and there on the membership rolls of local congregations, names began to appear which obviously had no previous connection with a Scandinavian heritage. Indeed, the annual reports from the English Association of Churches often stressed the fact that the encouraging growth of the Association was due in part to the broader outreach of the Church into the non-Scandinavian elements of the community. Such accessions

¹⁵ *Emigrationsutredningen*, Bilaga IV, p. 124f. See especially Table 35. Oscar A. Benson, *op. cit.*, pp. 31ff. See especially chart, p. 33.

¹⁶ Current, Williams and Freidel, *American History, A Survey*, *op. cit.*, p. 700.

¹⁷ Florence E. Janson, *The Background of Swedish Immigration*, Chicago, 1931, p. 12.

in themselves, coupled with the growth of a larger community consciousness, were a part of the process Americanization.¹⁸

The decrease of immigration was involved in the Americanization of the Augustana Synod also in the sense that it encouraged and accelerated the *Anglicization* of the Synod. Since the Swedish language was a primary tool in the work among the immigrants, a constant inflow of immigration demanded its continued use. When immigration was drastically reduced, and the need and demand for Swedish was somewhat less imperative, the process of Anglicization was correspondingly encouraged.

The Language Transition

To be sure, Americanization involved more than the change in the use of language, but the use of English was indubitably an important barometer of the process. The increased use of the English language was perhaps the chief factor in the process of Americanization. "As long as Augustana congregations retained the Swedish language, the Synod retained its predominantly old-world character and outlook. But as soon as the English language was adopted by pastors and congregations, the process of Americanization was completed almost overnight."¹⁹

One of the foremost leaders in the struggle for greater use of English in the Augustana Church, Dr. I. O. Nothstein, has declared that although the period from 1910 to 1925 witnessed the triumph of English over the Swedish language throughout the Synod, English was being used in the very earliest days of the Church. In his essay entitled, *The Language Transition in the Augustana Synod*,²⁰ Dr. Nothstein points out that the founding fathers of the Augustana Synod plainly recognized that, although it was necessary to use the Swedish language among the immigrants, in the long run the use of Swedish in the Lutheran Church in America was a passing phase which belonged to the immigrant era. They sought, therefore, to prepare their people for the transition from Swedish to English. Esbjörn, for example, used English in the earliest Sunday schools he established, and even conducted frequent services of worship in English on Sunday afternoons, "not only

¹⁸ See for example the report of F. O. Hanson, *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1913, pp. 23ff. See also the essay by Peter Peterson, "Our Missions at Home," *After Seventy-Five Years*, op. cit., pp. 194ff.

¹⁹ Gene J. Lund, op. cit., p. 159.

²⁰ *The Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. 24, 1945, pp. 209-223, 327-346. The author is indebted to Dr. Nothstein's excellent essay for much of the material in this section.

in order to be useful to the Americans . . . but also with a view of making my countrymen more acquainted with the English language.”²¹ Pastors Erland Carlsson, T. N. Hasselquist, and Jonas Swensson also encouraged the use of English in their Sunday schools, young people’s groups and confirmation classes, and conducted English services of worship whenever there seemed to be a need or demand for them. After the close of the Civil War, however, and the subsequent steep rise in Swedish immigration coupled with the separation of the Norwegians from the Synod in 1870, which left the Swedes to themselves, a change occurred. The earlier urge to Americanize seems to have been dissipated, and the Synod became very much a Swedish institution. In its preoccupation with the Swedish-speaking immigrants, the Synod forgot to provide adequately for its own rising younger generation. The result was that children were attracted to American Sunday schools of other denominations, and English-speaking young people began to withdraw from Augustana and establish connections with non-Lutheran churches.²² Indeed, the Congregational Church is reported to have spent money to establish English-speaking Sunday schools in strong Lutheran centers in order to win the disgruntled Lutheran children and youth. And some Reformed pastors went so far as to organize confirmation classes for Lutheran youth in their own churches, inviting parents to send their children to these classes for their confirmation instruction in a language they could more readily understand.²³ Through such circumstances many were ultimately lost to the Lutheran Church. The Synod seems to have accepted these losses with a strange equanimity. Apparently, it was taken for granted that those who insisted on getting their religion in an English dress could be expected,—indeed, were welcome—to go elsewhere.

The “language question” did not become a “language problem” for the Augustana Synod until the Synod found itself in competition with other Lutheran groups who succeeded in making such serious encroachments upon Augustana membership and territory that the Synod was finally shaken out of its Swedish complacency.

Both the General Synod and the General Council were committed to English home missions in the Midwest. It was the General Council which first confronted the Augustana Synod with a challenge which could not be ignored. This occurred when the Council, under the

²¹ Esbjörn’s report to American Home Missionary Society, June, 1852, *Ibid.*, p. 209.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 210f.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

guidance of Dr. W. A. Passavant, decided to initiate English missions in Minnesota in 1881, and the following year sent Pastor George Trabert into the territory. Two years later, July, 1884, a second English missionary, Pastor A. J. D. Haupt, was engaged by the Council and joined Trabert in Minnesota. With consummate tact these two men worked in close co-operation with the Minnesota Conference in the establishment of English congregations. Indeed, both Trabert and Haupt, in order to maintain the best possible relationships with the Swedes, joined the Augustana Synod, although their salaries were paid by the Council.²⁴ On the basis of the "Lancaster Compromise,"²⁵ it was assumed by both Augustana and the Council that the new English congregations formed on so-called "Augustana territory," would become members of the Augustana Synod. The first two English congregations organized under General Council auspices, St. John's in Minneapolis which was formed in 1883, and Luther Memorial in St. Paul, formed later the same year, did join the Synod through affiliation with the Minnesota Conference.²⁶ As long as the General Council was willing to furnish the men to carry on the work, and supply the bulk of the funds for their support, while the congregations they organized would affiliate with Augustana, the Minnesota Conference and the Synod were happy to see the English missions of the Council succeed, and extended their good will to the missionaries. When, however, the new English congregations which were organized during the next several years in West St. Paul, Duluth, Fargo, North Dakota, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, refused to join the Minnesota Conference because they felt that Augustana was altogether too Swedish, the Augustana attitude changed to apprehension and suspicion. This attitude was increased and deepened in the spring of 1890 when missionary Haupt notified the Minnesota Conference that the Memorial Church in St. Paul wished to withdraw from the Augustana Synod.²⁷ When the General Council proceeded to form the rival *Synod of the Northwest*, in 1891²⁸ and went on to establish the new English-speaking theological seminary in Chicago as a rival to the school in Rock Island the same year,²⁹ the Augustana Synod was finally awakened to the need for a

²⁴ Trabert, *English Lutheranism in the Northwest*, *op. cit.*, pp. 58ff. See also Emeroy Johnson, *God Gave the Growth*, *op. cit.*, pp. 209ff.

²⁵ *Supra*, Chapter VIII, p. 156.

²⁶ *Referat*, Minnesota Conference 1884, p. 22.

²⁷ Trabert, *op. cit.*, pp. 111ff.

²⁸ *Supra*, Chapter VIII, p. 157.

²⁹ *Supra*, Chapter VIII, p. 155.

new approach to the "language question" which had now become a "problem."

The awakening of Augustana to the demand for more English was by no means a sudden experience. It was a somewhat gradual process which took several years. In the meantime, there were a few stalwart spirits in the Synod, like Pastor John Telleen, who championed the cause of English especially for the sake of the young. Traveling far and wide as a home missionary for the Augustana Synod, establishing new congregations in such distant places as Denver, Colorado; San Francisco, San Jose, Los Angeles, Kingsburg, and Templeton, California, Telleen was in the truest sense of the word a pioneer for English work in the Augustana Synod. Dr. G. A. Brandelle, onetime president of the Synod, said of Pastor Telleen,

At the time of his ordination in 1872, he was the only one of the seventy-three clergymen of the Augustana Synod who could speak the English language satisfactorily, fluently, and forcibly . . . for a long term of years he was easily the most popular pulpiteer in the Synod.³⁰

The majority opinion in the Synod for many years, however, seemed to favor the position taken by Dr. J. A. Enander, editor of *Hemlandet*. He was passionately pro-Swedish, and strongly opposed to the use of English in Augustana congregations. As "the most Swedish Swede in America," he expended his best energies to encourage the preservation of Swedish language and culture, and to discourage the further spread of such an "inadequate medium of religious communication" as the English tongue. And to the influence of Enander and others of his temperament the reluctance and tardiness of the Synod's awakening may in some degree be attributed.³¹

In spite of opposition and indifference, the demand for English was on the increase. Reports from conference presidents made frequent reference to pressures for English being exerted on local congregations.³² And at the convention of the Minnesota Conference in 1894, Dr. Eric Norelius summarized the "language problem" by reminding his people that the question which demanded solution was not "whether or not we shall make use of the English language," but rather, "Shall we permit English Lutheran Synods to take over the English work among us, or shall we do this ourselves and try to re-

³⁰ Biographical sketch of Telleen, *My Church*, Vol. XX, 1934, pp. 110ff.

³¹ Nothstein, *op. cit.*, note p. 222.

³² *Referat*, Illinois Conference, 1893, p. 12. *Referat*, Minnesota Conference, 1897, p. 12. *Referat*, Iowa Conference, 1900, p. 10. *Referat*, Superior Conference, 1913, p. 18.

tain the generation now growing up in our conference and Synod.”³³

While the English missions of the General Council were posing a threat to the Augustana Synod, particularly in Minnesota, the English missions of the General Synod were doing very much the same thing elsewhere in the Church. In Ottumwa, Iowa, for example, the Augustana Synod had been carrying on a growing work since the days of the pioneers, organizing an Augustana congregation in that community in 1871. This was considered Augustana territory, and the synodical leaders held that no Lutheran body ought to begin a rival work without careful consultation with the local Augustana congregation and the officials of the Iowa Conference. Since the General Synod, however, had been doing missionary work in the Midwest for a half century it felt that it had prior claims to the area and needed no one's permission to start church work wherever it was deemed necessary. Thus, the General Synod established an English Lutheran congregation in Ottumwa about 1911 without consulting with anyone from Augustana. The vehement protests of the Augustana pastor in Ottumwa, Rev. O. A. Henry, were of no avail, and the president of the Augustana Synod could do little more than refer the case to the Board of Arbitration of the General Synod. But this agency had scant patience with the territorial claims of the Augustana Synod whose primary concern was said to be with the Swedish immigrants in the country.³⁴

What was occurring in Iowa, was being re-enacted in Seattle, Washington, where the Augustana Synod had established the Gethsemane congregation in 1885. Although Seattle and the Pacific northwest was not regarded in Augustana circles with quite the same proprietary sentiments as Iowa and the Midwest, it was nevertheless considered Augustana territory to the extent that the establishment of other Lutheran missions ought to be undertaken only after consultation with Augustana. As in Ottumwa, so also in Seattle, the General Synod began an English mission on the assumption that the Augustana Synod was “the Lutheran Church for the Swedes.” Here again, the local Augustana pastor, Rev. C. E. Frisk, sent protests to the president of the Augustana Synod, but without achieving any results.³⁵

³³ *Referat*, Minnesota Conference, 1894, p. 14, quoted by Lund, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

³⁴ See letter from O. A. Henry to L. A. Johnston, March 15, 1912, *L. A. Johnston Collection*, Augustana Archives. Letter from W. D. C. Keiter, president of the Board of Arbitration, General Synod, Allentown, Pa., April 10, 1912, *L. A. Johnston Collection*, Augustana Archives. For a similar situation which developed in Des Moines, Iowa, see *Referat*, Iowa Conference, 1909, p. 25.

³⁵ See letter from C. E. Frisk to L. A. Johnston, October 15, 1912, *L. A. Johnston Collection*, Augustana Archives.

And so the pressure was on. Forces both outside and inside the Augustana Synod were compelling the church to awaken to the need for some kind of action which would, so to speak, legitimize and give direction to English missions within the Augustana Synod.

It was not until the *Association of English Churches* was formed in 1908, however, that the Synod may be said officially to have taken a really decisive step in acknowledging and guiding the increasing demand for more English.³⁶ Though the Synod refused to grant the Association the status of a conference, for fear that an English conference in the Synod might develop separatistic tendencies, it did sanction the Association as a consultative agency, without legislative powers. As such, the Association provided the English congregations in the Synod with an important and valuable means for the adjudication of their common problems, and a medium through which they could address themselves with one voice to the Synod and press for such action as they deemed advisable.³⁷

Preliminary to the organization of the Association of English Churches, a questionnaire was sent to all pastors of the Synod asking for information concerning the extent to which the English language was being used in their parishes. Out of the 1,049 congregations, replies were received from 168, and though this was but a fraction of the whole, it represented a fair cross section of the Synod, and therefore the responses reflected the situation prevailing in the Synod at the time. The survey revealed the following interesting information:

- 44 congregations reported no English work at all.
- 49 congregations had some English work, but no English worship services.
- 42 congregations conducted English services on one Sunday evening a month.
- 18 congregations conducted English services on two Sunday evenings a month.
- 3 congregations conducted English services on three Sunday evenings a month.
- 12 congregations conducted English services every Sunday evening.

In the 168 responding congregations, 563 children had been confirmed in English, and 3,142 children had received English instruction in Sunday school during 1908. On the basis of the survey, it was estimated that out of a total of 69,510 children enrolled in Augustana Sunday schools in 1908, 20,012 had received some English

³⁶ *Supra*, Chapter VIII, p. 158.

³⁷ Nothstein, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

instruction in the Sunday school; and out of a total of 7,646 confirmations in 1908, 3,586 children had been confirmed in English.³⁸

Thus it was obvious that by 1908 the process of Anglicization was well under way in the parishes of the Synod. But in the next few years the process would be sharply accelerated. This increasing Anglicization of the Synod is clearly revealed in a survey of the highlights taken from the annual reports submitted to the Synod by the Association of English Churches. According to these reports the following developments mark the path of progress:

In 1910 the Synod granted the Association full representation on the Synodical Council, resolved to pay the traveling expenses of the Association's executive committee to one Council meeting, ordered an abstract of the synodical minutes to be printed in English, and ordered that an English recording secretary for the Synod be elected. The Synod also urged all the conferences to publish English abstracts of their minutes.³⁹

At the convention in 1911, the Synod, in response to a petition from the Association, resolved to call an English field secretary and authorized a synod-wide offering to pay for the new office. The Synod also urged the various conferences "to see to it that congregations be organized in places where the needs of our people can best be met by means of the English language." The first English field secretary, Pastor F. O. Hanson, was called and began his work in 1912.⁴⁰

In 1914 the Synod acknowledged the increased use of English by adopting the following resolution: "At the same time as the Synod is concerned for the preservation of the Swedish language, customs, and culture in connection with our work as a church, yet it is conscious of the fact that the number of those for whom English must be the language of worship is constantly increasing, and thanks God for the progress which the English work is winning and for the fruits which it has already borne."⁴¹

By 1915 the English work of the Synod had grown to such proportions that the Synodical Board of Home Missions called a second English field secretary, Pastor P. N. Sjogren who began his work in May, 1915. The Synod resolved that, "It is a cause for thanksgiving and praise to God that our Synod's English work, for which we now have two field secretaries, has been carried on with power and success in no less than fourteen states, and in thirty-eight congregations."⁴²

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

³⁹ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1910, pp. 174f.

⁴⁰ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1911, p. 153f. *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1913, pp. 23ff.

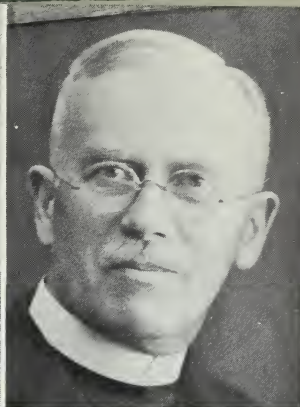
⁴¹ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1914, Resolution 18, p. 34.

⁴² *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1915, pp. 37, 79. For a detailed discussion of the survey see Nothstein, *op. cit.*, p. 336f.

Pioneer
Foreign
Missionaries



A. B. CARLSON

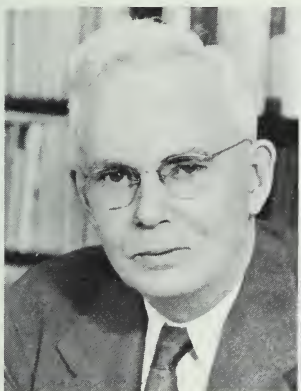


A. W. EDWINS



RALPH HULT

Executive
Directors of
Foreign
Missions



S. HJALMAR SWANSON
Executive Director
1939-1955



M. A. HAMMARBERG
Executive Director
1955-1961



RUDOLPH BURKE
Executive Director
1961-1962

STUDENT BODY AND CLASS ROOM BUILDING
Ruruma Girls School, Tanganyika, Africa





MAIN BUILDING
Lutheran Theological
Seminary
Tokyo, Japan



CHURCH AT IAMBI
MISSION STATION
Tanganyika, East Africa



A STREET MEETING IN
CHINA
Mrs. Herbert Zimmerman
calls people together
with her accordion.

LAYING THE CORNERSTONE
Lutheran Church, Rivera, Uruguay



LUTHERAN CHURCH AND BOOK STORE
Hong Kong

FIRST ORGANIZED LUTHERAN CHURCH
Kaohsiung, Taiwan





JULIUS LINCOLN
Executive Director
1925-1928



C. OSCAR LEONARDSON
Executive Director
1945-1957

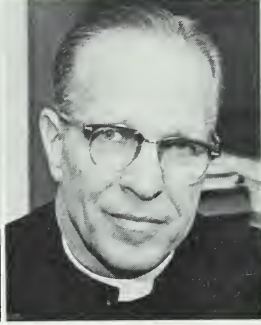


CARL H. JACOBSON
Executive Director
1957-1962

Augustana Churchmen



S. E. ENGSTROM
Executive Director
1939-1954



THEODORE E. MATSON
Executive Director
1954-1962

American Missions



OTTO LEONARDSON
Director of Stewardship
1928-1943
Director of Finance
1943-1952



T. A. GUSTAFSON
Director of Stewardship
1943-1949

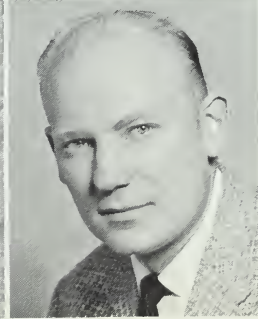


MARTIN E. CARLSON
Director of Stewardship
1949-1952
Director of Finance
1955-1962

Department of Finance



J. BRUCE SIFFORD
Executive Director
1947-1959



K. ROGER SIFFORD
Executive Director
1959-1962

Audio-Visual Service

**FIRST HOME OF
AUGUSTANA
BOOK CONCERN**
Rock Island, Illinois



A. G. ANDERSON
Manager of
Augustana
Book Concern
1889-1927



J. G. YOUNGQUIST
Manager of Augustana
Book Concern, 1927-1944

**PRESENT HOME OF
AUGUSTANA BOOK CONCERN**
Rock Island, Illinois



BIRGER SWENSON
Manager of Augustana
Book Concern, 1944-1962

Publication Work of the Synod



T. N. HASSELQUIST
Editor of "Hemlandet"
1855-1889



ERIC NORELIUS
Editor and Historian



S. P. A. LINDAHL
Editor of "Augustana"
1890-1908

Editors of Church Publications



L. G. ABRAHAMSON
Editor of "Augustana"
1908-1939



CARL J. BENGSTON
Editor of
"Lutheran Companion"
1915-1933



A. T. LUNDHOLM
Editor of "Augustana"
1940-1956



E. E. RYDEN
Editor of
"Lutheran Companion"
1934-1961



PAUL E. GUSTAFSON
Editor of
"Lutheran Companion"
1961-1962

While the Association of English Churches was continuing to hold up the English work before the eyes of the Synod and thus promote the cause throughout the Church, the *Lutheran Companion*, edited by C. J. Sodergren, and aided by Professor I. M. Anderson, C. A. Wendell, and C. O. Lundquist, all of whom were committed to the English cause, became the voice of English Lutheranism in the Synod. Again and again the *Companion* gave vent to the impatience which the English advocates felt toward the reluctance of the Synod to make the transition from Swedish to English. It exerted considerable pressure to hasten the change. In the issue of July 15, 1911, the *Companion* editorialized in the following vein:

No one wishes to rob the old folks of the Swedish. . . . In all our Swedish congregations the old folks are welcome, and will be for years to come, to half of the services, and that the better half—the Sunday morning service. And no Christian will starve to death on this and a weekday meeting. . . . But if we are considerate toward the old people and respect their admitted rights, we should also be equally careful not to refuse to give our young people their spiritual support. We should be as concerned about *their* spiritual welfare. . . . To have English services only once a month, or even every other Sunday evening, is almost worse than nothing. It hurts the Swedish, and is of no conserving value to the English element. It is merely a poor excuse. . . . This plausible (?) selfishness which makes a language an end instead of a means is not a good conservative policy if our Synod is to live. . . . It will not do to sacrifice souls on the altar of nationality. Our congregations have a far higher calling than to be a mere “National-förening” . . .⁴³

Again in the issue of August 30, 1913, the *Lutheran Companion* had the following to say about the “language problem:”

Dear old Swedish language! We all love it—but some of us don't like it. We feel for it a sense of loyalty and respect akin to what good children naturally feel for their parents. Nevertheless, a new generation, born and reared far from the doughty little kingdom which once was the land of our fathers, is prone to conform to the customs of the country in which it finds itself, and to speak the language which is generally employed as a medium for the expression of thought. The children, the young people (and ever so many old people), almost invariably use the English language in ordinary conversation. . . . God wants all to be saved. Why not tell His message in as natural and intelligible a manner as possible; in Swedish to those who think in Swedish, in English to those who think in English. . . . What would we suggest? That our children be taught Christianity largely by means of the Eng-

⁴³ Vol. XIX, No. 28, p. 1.

lish language, even in our Swedish congregations . . .⁴⁴ None of us are in a hurry to "get rid of the Swedish," but we are "in a hurry" to preserve these souls with or without Swedish. And if that can be done only by means of the English language we are guilty of murder or at least criminal neglect in failing to anticipate and make due provision. The *Companion* stands for neither Swedish nor English. It stands for the cause of Christ and the welfare of souls. If shortsighted language-conservatism should prove to stand in the way of Christ and the future of our Church, we have no choice but to do as Luther did: let the Latin go and insist on using German in the *interest of the common people*. They are of more value than much Latin. The word of God is not Swedish; the Church of Christ is not Swedish; Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not Swedish. Nor are any or all of them English. It is not a matter of language. . . .⁴⁵

The Influence of World War I

In 1917-1918 an event occurred which gave immense impetus to both the Anglicization and Americanization of the Augustana Synod. That event was World War I. In the war hysteria, those who called themselves "100 per cent Americans" stirred up a spirit of fanatical patriotism which created a nationwide sentiment against the use of foreign languages in American churches, schools, and newspapers. The exclusive use of English was taken as a barometer of one's loyalty and patriotism. So great did the agitation become that a number of states passed laws forbidding the use of any language except English. Any congregation, indeed, any individual person, who dared to flaunt public opinion by refusing to give up the use of a foreign tongue, was branded as "pro-German" and a "yellow-belly." Some communities awoke on a morning to find that a self-appointed committee of "100 per cent Americans" had paid them a nocturnal visit, splashing their churches and schools with yellow paint as a warning against the future use of a foreign language. Such coercive measures were regrettable but effective. Virtually over night the congregations of the Augustana Synod made the transition from Swedish to English, even though in some parishes neither the pastors nor the people were adequately prepared for the sudden change.⁴⁶ In spite of

⁴⁴ Vol. XXI, N. 35, p. 6.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴⁶ Cf. Johnson, *God Gave the Growth*, *op. cit.*, p. 225. Instances of Americanization by force and coercion were numerous during World War I. In several communications to Grosvenor B. Clarkson, Director of the Council of National Defense, Washington, D. C., Dr. Lauritz Larsen executive secretary of the National Lutheran Council, cites a number of cases where would-be

such hardships, it may nevertheless be said that one of the few benefits of the period of 1917-1918 was the powerful impetus which it gave to the quick and relatively easy transition which many nationalistic groups in America, including the Augustana Synod, made to the English language. For Augustana the transition was so complete that in his report to the Synod in 1921, Dr. G. A. Brandelle felt obliged to suggest that in the rapid Anglicization of the Synod, "one or two congregations should be kept in the large cities as exclusively Swedish churches" to which the Swedish-speaking immigrants and visitors could go.⁴⁷

The war of 1917-1918 did more than hasten the Anglicization of the Synod. It also fostered a spirit of American patriotism and national self-consciousness which infected virtually every section of the country and all levels of American society, including Augustana. President Wilson and other national leaders persuaded the people that America was waging war "to make the world safe for democracy." The war was interpreted idealistically as a great crusade to rid the world of tyranny, and the effort demanded and merited the kind of national unity and sacrifice that included the entire population. There were no longer any "hyphenated Americans." Every loyal citizen was an *American*, whether he came to these shores recently or counted his forbears among the earliest pioneers. Every patriotic American had an image of himself as being a part of the mind and muscle of "Uncle Sam." In this time of national crisis the loyalties connected with a former homeland became secondary to the greater and more immediate loyalty which the new homeland craved from its subjects. In the Augustana Synod the church press as well as parish pulpits often became forums for political discussion and exhortations to loyalty and faithfulness to American ideals. The *Lutheran Companion* was particularly vocal on current issues, and nearly every issue during the war years carried some story or article designed to create a "pro-American" spirit. The *Augustana* was more conservative and reticent but it, too, was thoroughly committed to the American cause.⁴⁸

"patriots" resorted to gangland tactics to force Lutheran pastors to use English exclusively. Copies of communications in *Brandelle Collection*, Augustana Archives.

⁴⁷ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1921, p. 17.

⁴⁸ The columns of the *Lutheran Companion* were filled with articles and pictures of war and politics, of which the following issues are but a few typical instances: January 26, 1918, February 9, 1918, February 16, 1918, March 9, 1918, May 5, 1918, June 1, 1918, August 31, 1918. Every month advertisements appeared in the *Companion* urging readers to "invest all you possibly

The war years also encouraged Americanization in the Synod by providing pastors and people with unusual opportunities for community service. The Augustana Synod gave its fullest support to the united Lutheran effort to provide a Christian ministry to the military services through supplying its quota of camp pastors and chaplains. When the *National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare* was formed in October, 1917, as an emergency organization to minister to men in Armed Service, the Augustana Synod gave its fullest co-operation. Through this agency, the Synod contributed to a vast and complex program of spiritual and physical care which reached from the military training camps in this country to the trenches, hospitals, and service stations on the battle fields of Europe. And after the war was over, when it was found that millions of men, women, and children in war-torn Europe were dying of hunger, disease, and exposure, the Augustana Synod joined other Lutheran bodies which through the Commission contributed substantial sums of money, thousands of pounds of food and clothing, as well as medicines and other necessities for the relief of the war victims. In these common endeavors the Synod lost whatever sense of isolation and strangeness it might formerly have felt in America. The people of Augustana had learned to think of themselves as Americans, and their Church as an integral and indigenous part of the national life.⁴⁹

In the years immediately following the war, the Anglicization and Americanization of the Synod continued, so that in 1923 the president of the Association of English Churches could report that on the basis of a recent survey it had been discovered that the number of non-Swedish members of the Synod had greatly increased, and that whereas the growth of the Synod as a whole in the past year had been 1.1 per cent, the English churches had enjoyed a membership increase of 19 per cent. In 1924, the Synod resolved that henceforth its annual Minutes would be printed only in English. At the same convention, the first class of ministerial candidates was ordained in the language of the land. The following year, 1925, the Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, Superior, and California Conferences reported to the Synod that their meetings, and

can in Liberty Bonds." Though articles regarding the war effort were less frequent in *Augustana* the following issues carried typical utterances: February 21, 1918, April 18, 1918, June 27, 1918 and August 1, 1918. Advertisements for Liberty Bonds were less frequent than in the *Companion*.

⁴⁹ Cf. Essay by P. Arthur Johnson, "National and International Relationships of the Augustana Synod." *After Seventy-Five Years*, op. cit., pp. 83ff.

most of their parish work, were being conducted in the English language. At the same convention, the Synod adopted for the first time its own English Hymnal and Service Book for use throughout the congregations. Thus, with the Augustana Synod now carrying on its official business, conducting most of its parish programs, and expressing its worship life almost entirely, in the English language, the process of Anglicization, and with it the Americanization of the Synod, may be said to have become an accomplished fact.⁵⁰

Americanization and the Faith of Augustana

In this significant cultural and intellectual transposition, which began as a quiet leaven in the early years, but which gathered steady momentum, so that from 1910 to about 1925 it swept like a storm through the Synod, how had the faith of the Augustana Synod fared? After the process of Anglicization and Americanization had left its marks upon so much of the life of the Augustana Synod, was the faith, the theological and confessional position of the founding fathers, still the *ständpunkt* of the children of the new age? Since no survey or definitive study was undertaken to elicit accurate answers to such questions, any conclusions that may now be drawn must be general in nature, and based upon broad premises.

The first broad premise is that Augustana, in common with any institution, has, in general, reflected the thought of its influential teachers. The most influential teacher in the Synod after the death of Hasselquist and Olof Olsson, was undoubtedly Dr. Conrad Emil Lindberg, who taught systematic theology and symbolics at Augustana Seminary from 1890 until his death in 1930. Dr. Lindberg was a conservative Lutheran, who saw the theology of the sixteenth century through the spectacles of the seventeenth-century Lutheran orthodox scholastics. But his own personal piety also reflected the influence of Carl Olof Rosenius. It was this man who set the fundamental pattern of thought for the clergy, and through them for the laity, of the Augustana Synod for forty years. Though keenly aware of the changing thought forms and approaches to theology characteristic of the various theologians of his day, it is doubtful if Dr. Lindberg seriously altered or drastically modified his basic and fundamental position during his years as a theological professor. He was, to be sure, deeply interested in the controversies stirred up

⁵⁰ For a more detailed account of the post-war years, see Nothstein, *op. cit.*, p. 340f.

by the higher and lower critics, but personally took relatively little part in the debates.⁵¹ This he left to his two colleagues on the theological faculty, Dr. S. G. Youngert and Dr. C. J. Sodergren.

These men did not share the fears of Dr. Alfred Bergin who once declared that "modern biblical criticism is not at home within our Synod. . . . The Augustana Synod can and will escape the modernist conflicts if we remain faithful to God's Word."⁵² Youngert and Sodergren sought to point out the positive contributions of both higher and lower criticism, but they interpreted the critical schools in harmony with such conservative European theologians as Theodore Zahn and Adolf Kolmodin. While Youngert held, for example, that the source of the four written Gospels was an oral gospel, he also believed that Moses wrote all the books attributed to him in the canonical tradition, with the exception of the last chapter of Deuteronomy. Sodergren, however, took a more critical view of the Bible, and taught that there are discrepancies in the biblical text, but firmly contended for what he called "the plenary inspiration of the Bible," which is to say, that the Bible is to be received as the inspired word of God, and therefore normative for faith and practice, but without making commitment to any particular *theory* of inspiration. Regarding the teaching concerning the sacraments, all members of the theological faculty were faithful exponents of the historic Lutheran confessions, maintaining baptismal regeneration, and Christ's presence in the Eucharist.⁵³ The available sermons and addresses which reflect the kind of preaching the people of the Augustana Synod were listening to during and at the close of the period under consideration, indicate that there was perhaps a more vivid sense of the "existential," because of the climactic world events, and therefore a somewhat more deliberate effort to make preaching relevant to the great problems of the day. Nevertheless, the available evidence also suggests that theologically and doctrinally the great fundamental truths for which the pioneer forefathers of Augustana had contended had been maintained in the period of cultural and intellectual transposition.

This conclusion is supported by a second broad premise, which is that the theology of a Church is reflected in the cult life of the

⁵¹ Karl E. Mattson, "The Theology of the Augustana Lutheran Church," *Centennial Essays*, *op. cit.*, p. 46f.

⁵² "Den destruktiva bibelkritiken," *Tidskrift för teologi*, Vol. IX, 1907, pp. 135ff.

⁵³ Cf. Eric H. Wahlstrom, "The Means of Grace," *Centennial Essays*, *op. cit.*, pp. 5ff.

people, and any serious modification of basic theology will be expressed in corresponding changes in cult patterns. In this connection, it is instructive to note that the Order of Service which the new English Hymnal and Service Book of 1925 provided was an English adaptation of the Swedish Order of 1923. Though the Augustana English liturgy of 1925 involved a number of changes from the old Augustana Swedish Order of 1905, the liturgy for the chief service including Holy Communion had no substantive changes which were expressive of fundamental theological modifications. Thus, it may be said that though the Augustana Synod, after 1925, worshiped and expressed itself in the English language, the faith it held was basically the faith of the founding fathers.

Growth of Community

THE AMERICAN NATION emerged from World War I with a new sense of community. The gigantic mobilization of human and material resources for the war effort had given the entire land a common cause which had demanded a common sacrifice and a common loyalty, which in turn created a broader and deeper spirit of national unity than the country had known since the days before the Civil War. The 112,000 Americans who were killed in action, and the 237,000 Americans who were wounded, came from every section of the country and from all segments of the social scale, including Boston Bluebloods and Kentucky hillbillies. The meatless, wheatless, sweetless, and heatless days imposed by the Food and Fuel Administrations were burdens which were borne by young and old, rich and poor, country and city dweller, alike. Liberty bonds were purchased from border to border and coast to coast, frequently by those who had to borrow the money to pay for them. Massive shifts in the population had served to dissipate the traditional sectionalism and parochial loyalties and engender a broader sense of American nationalism.¹

The new sense of community reached, however, beyond American borders. During the war years the United States had almost unwittingly become the "good Samaritan" to other nations of the world. Under the inspiring leadership of Herbert Hoover, thousands of tons of food and clothing were collected and shipped to Europe to relieve the sufferings attendant upon the war. The entire country of Belgium was literally saved from starvation by American aid, while thousands of men, women, and children in France, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Armenia were given medicine, food, and clothing, and thus provided with a new chance for survival. By responding to the numerous appeals for help from suffering people in many parts of the world, America discovered a new dimension of community concern which was worldwide. Thus, the World War, though brutalizing in many of its

¹ Olmstead, *op. cit.*, pp. 495-514. Current, Williams and Freidel, *op. cit.*, pp. 660-679. Wentz, *op. cit.*, pp. 251ff. Abell, Fleming, Levack, McAvoy and Mannion, *op. cit.*, pp. 480-499.

effects, did generate a new spirit of community consciousness which transcended national boundaries and possessed a world-wide scope.²

Augustana and The Developing Sense of Community

While all of America participated to some extent in the development of this new consciousness of community, no segment of American society responded more eagerly to its challenge or expressed and embodied its ideals more vigorously than the American churches. Whether it was the sale of liberty bonds or the collection of food and clothing for European relief, the religious forces of America took the lead and got the job done. And among them was the Augustana Synod.

During this period the Synod enjoyed the good fortune of having a capable man at the helm who was in complete sympathy with the trend of the times. *Gustaf Albert Brandelle*, president of the Augustana Synod from 1918 until the fall of 1935, was an advocate of ecumenism. He led the Synod through the transition "from the older Augustana, suspicious in its dealings with non-Lutheran church bodies and cautious in relations with Lutheran synods in America, to a Synod friendly in its attitudes toward other Protestants and active in furthering co-operation within Lutheranism."³ As vice president of the Synod, he presided over the synodical convention in Minneapolis, 1918, when the Augustana Church made its historic decision *not* to join the *United Lutheran Church in America*.⁴

Formation of the United Lutheran Church

For more than a quarter of a century the three great Lutheran federations in America, the General Synod, the General Council and the United Synod of the South, had been moving steadily closer together. The three bodies had resolved their theological differences and had undertaken a number of co-operative endeavors, including home and foreign missions, and the creation of the Common Service Book for public worship. By the second decade of the twentieth century, the relations between the three bodies had become so cordial that eventual organic union was almost taken for granted and

² W. W. Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America*, New York, 1939, pp. 551-597. W. E. Garrison, *The March of Faith*, New York, 1933, Chapters XVI-XIX. Gaius Glenn Atkins, *Religion in Our Times*, New York, 1932, pp. 110ff.

³ C. Bergendoff, *Centennial Essays*, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1918, p. 145f. The courage of Brandelle's leadership is evident in this episode.

awaited only the right moment.⁵ The precipitating occasion was the Quadri-Centennial of the Reformation in 1917. Plans for a worthy celebration of this notable anniversary had been under way for a number of years. A Joint Committee on the celebration of the Quadri-Centennial of the Reformation, representing the three bodies was organized in 1914, and established headquarters in Philadelphia. In April, 1917, a number of members of this Joint Committee formulated the following resolution which was referred to the presidents of the three church bodies for action:

Believing that the time has come for a more complete organization of the Lutheran Church in this country, we propose that the General Synod, the General Council and the United Synod of the South, together with all other bodies who are one with us in our Lutheran faith be united as soon as possible in one general organization to be known as The United Lutheran Church in America.⁶

The three presidents responded to this overture by appointing a committee to draft a constitution for a United Church to be submitted to the general bodies. By November, 1917, the three general bodies had approved the proposed constitution, and the matter was then submitted to the forty-six district synods constituting the three federations. From the fall of 1917 until the synodical convention in Minneapolis, June 5-11, 1918, the Augustana Church, as a district synod of the General Council, wrestled with the question whether or not to join the merger.⁷ The columns of both the synodical papers, *Augustana* and the *Lutheran Companion*, were filled with articles from pastors and laymen for and against the merger. Although the editors of both papers sought to maintain a neutral policy and present both sides of the question, it is evident that the Swedish *Augustana* was lukewarm toward the merger, while the *Lutheran Companion*, speaking for the more Americanized elements in the Synod, was enthusiastic in its support of the merger and urged Augustana to join the new church body. This difference in the attitude of the two official newspapers of the Synod reflected the differences of attitude within the Synod itself toward the General Council and, indeed, toward the very idea of federation. The conservative Swedish segments favored for the most part, an independent policy, and could not forget the pressures put upon them by the English missions of the General Council. This antipathy toward the

⁵ Wentz, *Basic History of the Lutheran Church in America*, op. cit., pp. 279ff.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

⁷ See editorial "Did the Merger Receive a Fair Show in Minneapolis?" *Lutheran Companion*, July 6, 1918, pp. 333ff.

Council was particularly strong in the Minnesota Conference, although it was by no means limited to that area.⁸ In the public press, however, somewhat less provincial reasons were given for opposing the merger. The opponents of merger quoted with approval the charge which Dr. F. Richter, president of the Iowa Synod, made to the effect that any merger with the General Synod would mean unionism with the discredited "American Lutheranism" of S. S. Schmucker.⁹ Similarly, Professor R. C. Lenski of the Joint Synod of Ohio opposed the merger because he claimed that Dr. V. G. A. Tressler, president of the General Synod, was a member of the Knight Templars, one of the higher Masonic orders. He asserted, therefore, that to become a party to the proposed merger was tantamount to condoning lodgery. This charge was also echoed in the anti-merger camp of Augustana.¹⁰ An article signed by "K. B." which appeared in *Augustana*, opposed the merger on the grounds that after the cessation of war hostilities, the Augustana Synod could well expect a great new influx of Swedish immigrants. An independent, Swedish-speaking Augustana Synod would be better able to meet the needs of these newcomers and attract them into the Lutheran fold than a Synod "swallowed up in a huge, new federation."¹¹ A layman from Nebraska opposed the merger because he felt that the Lutherans in the other church bodies were not sufficiently spiritual, and claimed to prove his point by reminding his readers of the fact that German people were known by everyone to like their "beer and schnapps."¹²

In contrast to these sentiments, strong, vigorous, and vocal support for the merger was being given by the somewhat less staid, younger, English-speaking elements in the Synod. They saw the merger as offering the best possibility for bringing the Augustana Church more quickly and directly into the center of American life and culture.

The acknowledged leader of this section of the Augustana Synod was the Synod's president, Dr. Brandelle.¹³ In spite of the widespread

⁸Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 320. The outstanding example of Swedish antipathy to merger, and the document which best summarizes the synodical determination to maintain synodical independence on nationalistic grounds is S. G. Öhman, *Augustanasynodens självständighetsförklaring*, Worcester, Mass., 1918.

⁹*Lutheran Companion*, January 12, 1918, p. 18.

¹⁰See article by J. P. Leaf, "I föreningsfrågan," *Augustana*, June 13, 1918, p. 386.

¹¹*Augustana*, January 24, 1918, p. 57.

¹²Alf. B. Olson, *Lutheran Companion*, March 30, 1918, p. 160f.

¹³For an estimate of Dr. Brandelle's leadership in this area of activity, see Gustav Andreen, "Gustaf Albert Brandelle," *My Church*, Vol. XXII, 1936,

opposition to the merger which he knew to be prevailing throughout the Synod, and courting disfavor and personal unpopularity for his stand, Brandelle nevertheless led the battle for merger. In his annual report to the Minneapolis convention, 1918, he declared:

The purpose of this merger is not to hinder the activity of this or any other synod. It does not involve in any degree the extirpation of any synod or any foreign language. For a long time the need for greater Lutheran unity in our country has been apparent, and in our present circumstances it has become particularly imperative. It is not possible just now to unite all Lutheran synods in the land in a single whole, but if that shall ever occur, there must be a beginning at some point, and that starting point has been given in the merger proposal which is before us. If this merger will be consummated, other synods from time to time will come with us. Those who are along from the beginning will be privileged to have a part in arranging the organization, while those who dally and come in later will have to accept what is offered. It is my honest and earnest desire that the Augustana Synod, which participated in the establishment of the General Council over fifty years ago, will also participate in the establishment of the United Lutheran Church, which beyond all other Lutheran organizations in this country will be the Lutheran Church of the future in the entire nation.¹⁴

In addition to Brandelle's plea, four representatives from the General Council, Dr. H. E. Jacobs, Dr. H. A. Waller, Dr. W. D. C. Keiter, and Mr. E. Clarence Miller were in attendance at the Minneapolis convention and added their voices in urging Augustana to become a part of the merger. But there was a combination of causes working together to frustrate these designs: a nationalistic loyalty to the Swedish tradition; a reaction against union resulting from the unpleasant experiences which competition with the English missions of the General Council had engendered, especially in Minnesota; a conviction that the time had not yet come when the Augustana Synod could divert its chief attention in home missions from the Swedish immigrants, and that the Synod could best meet immigrant needs as an independent synod; the belief that the safest and most promising way to achieve a broad and true Lutheran unity in America was by taking one step at a time, beginning with a federation wherein the existing synods would preserve their corporate identity, and work toward eventual organic union.

pp 17-27. E. E. Ryden, "A Tribute to Dr. Brandelle," *My Church*, XXI, pp. 75ff.

¹⁴ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1918, p. 24.

When it became evident in the debate at the Minneapolis convention that for one or more of the above reasons the majority was ready to reject out of hand the whole idea of merger, the following "compromise resolution" was offered by Pastor C. R. Swanson, president of the Columbia Conference,

Resolved that the Augustana Synod does not at this time see its way clear to enter the proposed merger of the United Lutheran Church in America, but declares itself in favor of a confederation of Lutheran church bodies in North America.¹⁵

This resolution was adopted by an almost unanimous vote. And at a later session during the convention this action was supplemented by adopting the following resolution:

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod has decided not to join the proposed merger of the General Synod, the General Council and the United Synod South, and

Whereas, the relation on the part of the synods belonging to the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America, appears to be of such a nature that the joining of the merger on the part of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America carries with it all the synods belonging to the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America, in which event also the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod in North America would become a party to the merger; therefore be it

Resolved:

1. That the Synod do now proceed to dissolve its connection with the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America.
2. That the Synod respectfully requests of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America the privilege to withdraw from the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America at its next meeting.
3. That the synodical Board of Missions is hereby directed to formulate ways and means for continuing our common work with the other synods of the General Council and that the Board report its action to the Synod as soon as possible.¹⁶

When the General Council met for its thirty-sixth convention in Holy Trinity Church, New York City, November 12-15, 1918, it responded to the Augustana request for dismissal by adopting the following:

¹⁵ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1918, p. 146. See also the report of these proceedings in *Lutheran Companion*, June 22, 1918, p. 110.

¹⁶ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1918, p. 146. See also *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1919, p. 24. The "common work" included foreign missions and campus ministry to students.

Whereas, the Augustana Synod after fifty years' identification with the General Council, and active co-operation in its work, has formally notified the General Council of its desire and intention to withdraw; and

Whereas, the reason assigned for such withdrawal is the union of other Synods of the General Council in the United Lutheran Church of America; and

Whereas, the founders of the Augustana Synod, even prior to the formation of the General Council, earnestly co-operated with those who founded that body in the clear confession, maintenance, and defense of the confessional position for which the General Council has always stood, and in the efforts to give such position that wide recognition which it today has attained; and

Whereas, the General Council remembers with thankfulness the devoted lives and services of Doctors Hasselquist, Olsson, and Esbjörn, Jonas Swensson, Drs. Carlsson and Norelius, and other fathers of the Augustana Synod, and the efficiency of Drs. Carl Swensson and Ranseen as presidents of the General Council, Therefore, be it Resolved—

That we record with great satisfaction the fact that the Augustana Synod so long in unity of faith with the General Council does not withdraw because of any differences in faith and practice;

That we remember with gratitude the saintly lives and the noble examples of the fathers of the Augustana Synod;

That we express our deepest regret that the Augustana Synod could not see its way clear at this time to remain with the General Council and enter with it into The United Lutheran Church;

That we appreciate the desire of the Augustana Synod to co-operate with The United Lutheran Church in educational and missionary work, especially Foreign Mission work, to which the Augustana Synod has furnished so many laborers and given such full measure of devotion for many years;

That we express the hope that the Augustana Synod may soon determine to enter into organic union with The United Lutheran Church and aid in the formation of one American Lutheran Church;

That these resolutions be spread upon our minutes, published in our church papers, and transmitted to the President of the Augustana Synod.¹⁷

With this action the connection between the Augustana Synod and the General Council was formally dissolved, and the Swedes had, for the second time, severed their ties with the Muhlenberg tradi-

¹⁷ *Minutes of the Thirty-sixth Convention of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America*, New York City, November 12-15, 1918, p. 10f.

tion.¹⁸ Augustana's withdrawal was assailed by some of its critics as being the result of the domination of "reactionaries."¹⁹ Others charged that Augustana was guilty of "un-American and un-Lutheran action," and of having "subordinated the unity of faith to the unity of race" because it was honeycombed with "provincialism" and "narrow nationalism."²⁰

Spokesmen for Augustana defended the Synod against such attacks by admitting that there was indeed a measure of Swedish loyalty in the Synod, for which very few were ready to apologize, but such loyalty was not a primary motivation in Augustana's refusal to merge. The chief reason for Augustana's insistence on maintaining its corporate existence was that the continuing work of immigrant home missions was still great enough to demand an independent organization for its prosecution. Upon this basic premise the Synod argued for the formation of some kind of federation as a more acceptable step toward the kind of true unity out of which organic consolidation could ultimately eventuate. Organic merger at this juncture was, at least for Augustana, premature. The Augustana apologists asked that the Synod's withdrawal from the Council and from the merger with the United Lutheran Church be given sympathetic consideration from these premises.²¹

Although the Augustana Synod for reasons which it deemed good and sufficient, refused to become a part of the new United Lutheran Church in America, the formation of that body in 1918 was in itself a manifestation of the growing sense of unity and community among Lutherans in America. While remaining outside the organization of the United Lutheran Church, Augustana established working agreements with the new body which enabled the Synod to continue the missionary activities initiated while still connected with the General Council. These activities included the work on the

¹⁸ The rupture with the General Synod in 1860, constituted the first break. The General Council included, to be sure, elements which did not stem from the labors of Muhlenberg, but the greater part of the General Council was comprised of district synods which, like Pennsylvania and New York, looked back to Muhlenberg origins.

¹⁹ Quotation from "G. H. T.," in *The Lutheran, Lutheran Companion*, July 6, 1918, p. 333f.

²⁰ See article titled "The Progress of the Merger" in *The Lutheran*, June 20, 1918. See also article titled "The Merger" in *Lutheran Companion*, July 6, 1918.

²¹ See for example article by Adolf Hult, titled "Augustana's Idealism in Her Federation Action," *Lutheran Companion*, August 31, 1918, pp. 443-445. See also editorials in *Augustana*, November 28, 1918, p. 772f.; February 20, 1919, p. 120.

foreign field in India, and the campus ministry to Lutheran students here at home. In both these areas Augustana and the United Lutheran Church became working partners.²²

The *principle of federation* instead of organic union must be seen as constituting a basic conviction of the Augustana Synod in 1918 rather than mere loose talk behind which narrow Swedish provincialism sought to hide. This is attested by the readiness with which Augustana co-operated in the formation of the *National Lutheran Council*. To be sure, the National Lutheran Council did not turn out to be a federation, in the strict sense of the word; it is rather a co-operative agency. But by bringing a number of independent bodies together in a co-operative coalition which enabled the constituents to undertake vast programs of common endeavors, the National Lutheran Council has served the purposes of a federation. In the creation of the Council, and in bringing the Augustana Synod into the center of its activities, G. A. Brandelle played a leading role.²³

Formation of the National Lutheran Council

The National Lutheran Council, a coalition of Lutheran bodies which cut across cultural and nationalistic lines, expressed and embodied the new sense of community within the Lutheran household in 1918. Its origins, however, were neither sudden nor fortuitous. The beginning of the National Lutheran Council may be said to have two main tap roots; the one in the preparations for the observance of the Quadri-Centennial of the Reformation in 1917, and the other in the exigencies of World War I.²⁴

In 1916, a year before the Quadricentennial, a representative group of Lutherans in New York formed *The Lutheran Society*, for the pur-

²² Swanson *Foundation for Tomorrow*, *op. cit.*, pp. 54ff. *Minutes of the First Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America*, 1918, p. 50. *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1919, p. 58.

²³ For an interesting defense of his leadership in bringing Augustana into the N. L. C. see Brandelle's reply to an attack on the N. L. C. by C. J. Sodergren, in *Augustana*, March 20, 1919, p. 182f. Sodergren wrote a caustic article denouncing the N. L. C. as "a new merger." In view of the Synod's recent refusal to merge with the U. L. C. A., Sodergren charged that Brandelle had acted deviously, "going behind the back of the Synod" to bring Augustana into the N. L. C. In an equally caustic article, *Augustana*, April 3, 1919, p. 223, Brandelle categorically denied Sodergren's charges, and accused him of a lack of candor and of being a peevish, self-appointed judge in matters of which he had little knowledge.

²⁴ For a detailed account of the formation of the National Lutheran Council see Osborne Hauge, *Lutherans Working Together*, New York, n. d., pp. 23-37.

pose of promoting and publicizing the forthcoming Reformation festivities. This agency was directed by the Rev. O. H. Pannkoek. The Quadricentennial awakened a new Lutheran self-consciousness, and brought Lutherans together clear across the land. The publicity Society was so successful in the undertakings that after the Reformation celebration it was continued as a permanent Lutheran agency and its name changed to *The Lutheran Bureau*. The Bureau was described by its director as an agency "of information to Lutherans and Lutheran churches about their Church, and about things of interest to their Church and to their work. It is a bureau of information for the world at large about the Lutheran Church, its history, its activities, its achievements."²⁵ In accomplishing its purpose the Lutheran Bureau did much to create a favorable climate for the emergence of closer ties among Lutherans in America and thus contributed to the laying of the foundation for the National Lutheran Council.

During World War I, virtually all Lutheran bodies in America participated in the support of a service agency which was organized in October, 1917, for the purpose of ministering to the spiritual welfare of men in the armed services of the United States. This agency was *The National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare*.²⁶ The Commission employed 150 camp pastors, aided in the recruitment and equipping of 89 army and 11 navy chaplains, maintained 30 service centers at home and in Europe, ministered to the sick and dying in some 60 hospitals, and sent a team of commissioners to France to help the French Lutheran Church and to serve the needs of American soldiers at the front and at rest centers.²⁷ The European commissioners received numerous urgent appeals from many countries pleading for financial, physical, and moral help. These appeals were transmitted to the people in America and served to awaken a new awareness of the immense human needs which the war created in Europe. At home, the rapidly expanding industrial areas contingent upon the war effort brought together new concentrations of people, and created social, economic and religious problems which called for urgent solution. Circumstances such as these combined to impel Lutheran leaders to give new and more serious thought to the imperative need for some kind of a permanent Lutheran agency which could provide the

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 24f. The Augustana Synod was represented on the Commission by Dr. C. A. Blomgren, and the Rev. C. E. Hoffsten functioned for some time as a field secretary. See report of *Second Annual Meeting National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare*, October 16, 1918, New York.

²⁷ Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

framework within which Lutheran bodies could continue, and even expand, their co-operative endeavors.²⁸

Without waiting for official action by their respective church bodies, the presidents of those Synods which had co-operated in the National Lutheran Commission met in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, July 17, 1918, and formulated plans for the creation of "a national council or committee of the Lutheran Church." A second preliminary session was held on August 1, 1918, at Pittsburgh, where plans were drawn up for a constituting convention to be held at the Auditorium Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, September 6, 1918. In all of these preliminary planning sessions Dr. G. A. Brandelle, representing the Augustana Synod, took an active part.²⁹ Thirty men, representing eight Lutheran bodies and the National Lutheran Commission, gathered in Chicago for the session at the Auditorium Hotel. The Augustana Synod was represented by two clergymen, Drs. Brandelle and Peter Peterson, and two laymen, Mr. N. A. Nelson and Mr. C. J. Appell.³⁰ The new organization that was formed at Chicago was called *The National Lutheran Council*. The first officers were: President, Dr. H. G. Stub, president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church; Vice-President Mr. John L. Zimmerman, of the General Synod; Secretary, Dr. Lauritz Larsen, of the Norwegian Lutheran Church; Treasurer, Mr. E. F. Eilert who represented the National Lutheran Commission. In addition to these officers, the following men were chosen to serve as members of the executive committee of the Council, Dr. F. H. Knubel, president of the National Lutheran Commission, and soon to be elected the first president of the United Lutheran Church; Dr. C. H. L. Schuette of the Joint Synod of Ohio; Dr. G. A. Brandelle, president of the Augustana Synod, and Dr. H. A. Waller of the General Council.³¹ The objectives of the new Council were stated to be:

²⁸ Resolutions to synodical presidents from *National Association of Lutheran Editors*, dated Waverly, Iowa, July 9, 1918, urging the presidents to take the initiative in the formation of a new Lutheran federation in America, signed by E. H. Treusch, document in *Brandelle Collection*, Augustana Archives. See also Hauge, *op. cit.*, p. 27f.

²⁹ Minutes of these sessions are preserved in the *Brandelle Collection*, Augustana Archives.

³⁰ *Minutes of the First Meeting, National Lutheran Council, Brandelle Collection*. The general bodies represented were: The Augustana Synod, The General Synod, The General Council, The Joint Synod of Ohio, the Synod of Iowa, The Norwegian Lutheran Church, The Norwegian Lutheran Free Church and the Danish Lutheran Church.

³¹ *Minutes of the First Meeting of the National Lutheran Council, Brandelle Collection*. Other men who played a prominent part in the early history of N. L. C. were: V. G. A. Tressler, T. E. Schmauk, C. M. Jacobs, F. Richter, M. Fritschel, L. W. Boe, George Sverdrup, W. C. Keiter, J. Siebert, G. K.

1. To speak for the Lutheran Church and give publicity to its utterances on all matters which require an expression of the common conviction and sentiment of the Church. 2. To be the representative of the Lutheran Church in America in its attitude toward or relation to, organized bodies outside itself, including national and state governments. 3. To bring to the attention of the participating bodies all such matters as require common utterances or action. 4. To further the work of recognized agencies of the Church that deal with problems arising out of war or other emergencies; to co-ordinate, harmonize, and unify their activities; and to create new agencies to meet circumstances which require common action. 5. To co-ordinate the activities of the Church and its agencies for the solution of new problems which affect the religious life and consciousness of the people, e. g., social, economic, and educational conditions. 6. To foster true Christian loyalty to the state; and to labor for the maintenance of a right relation between Church and state as distinct, divine institutions. 7. To promote the gathering and publication of true and uniform statistical information concerning the Lutheran Church in America. 8. To undertake such additional work as the participating bodies prescribe, without any interference on the Council's part, in any way, in the internal life and affairs of the participating bodies.³²

After its formation in 1918, the National Lutheran Council launched a broad program of home missions in the industrial centers of America; it undertook a nationwide publicity campaign to aid in the prosecution of home and foreign missions, and it established a bureau for gathering and publishing statistical information concerning the Lutheran Church in America.³³ During the first decade of its existence, however, the most important work of the Council centered in its program of European relief and reconstruction. Five commissioners were appointed to go to Europe and ascertain the needs there.³⁴

Rubrecht, J. Stump, John Morehead, G. L. Kieffer, W. H. Greever, O. Mees, H. E. Eilert, E. H. Rausch, J. Kildsig, G. T. Rygh, S. G. Youngert, G. A. Fandrey, and F. M. Riter.

³² Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 303f. The purposes of the Council are given under Article II, *Regulations Governing the National Lutheran Council, Minutes, op. cit.*, pp. 2ff.

³³ Hauge, *op. cit.*, pp. 38ff.

³⁴ The five commissioners were: Dr. John A. Morehead, president of Roanoke College, Professor Sven G. Youngert, Augustana Seminary, Rock Island; Rev. Gustav A. Fandrey of Chicago, Rev. H. J. Schuh of Ana, Ohio, and Rev. George T. Rygh of Columbus, S. C. These five co-operated with the three representatives of the National Lutheran Commission who were already working in France, M. F. M. Riter, Dr. Charles J. Smith, and Professor M. J. Stolee. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

At the same time an appeal for \$500,000 was made to the churches. The response was so great that \$600,000 was given, and gifts large and small, continued to flow into the treasury of the Council. By September, 1921, the Council had distributed more than \$1,250,000 in financial aid, together with food and clothing worth twice that amount. This aid was given to suffering people in seventeen European countries, although most of it went to Lutherans in France, Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. In the first ten years of its existence, the National Lutheran Council expended nearly \$8,000,000 for European relief.³⁵

The major premise upon which this remarkable enterprise in Lutheran co-operation was predicated was the avowed principle that all co-operative work within the framework of the National Lutheran Council must be limited to *external matters* only. *Res externae* was the oft-repeated phrase which was used to identify the legitimate areas of Council co-operation, in contrast to *res internae*, internal matters, over which the Council was to have nothing whatever to say. This *principle of limitation* reflected the suspicions which some members of the Council entertained toward other members. The tension involved especially the relationship between the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America and the United Lutheran Church in America both of which had been recently formed.³⁶ The Norwegians led by Dr. H. G. Stub, were suspicious of the doctrinal integrity of those elements in the United Lutheran Church which represented the tradition of the old General Synod. In the theological debates and discussions which had taken place over the past quarter of a century, the Norwegians, with a few notable exceptions,³⁷ had followed the leadership of the Missouri Synod and had identified themselves with *repristination confessionalism*. They tended to share the Missouri spirit of exclusiveness, and to insist, as Missouri did, upon extraconfessional refinements of doctrine as well as uniformity in church practice. The Norwegians, therefore, looked upon themselves as in some sense "more Lutheran" than the United Lutheran Church, and in any dealings with the U. L. C. A. wished to guard themselves against *unionism*, that is, fellowship without a common faith.³⁸

³⁵ Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 307f.

³⁶ In June, 1917 the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Hauge Synod and the Norwegian Synod merged to form the *Norwegian Lutheran Church of America*. The United Lutheran Church in America was organized November 14-18, 1918.

³⁷ Examples of such exceptions were George Sverdrup, T. N. Kildahl, and E. K. Johnsen.

³⁸ An analysis of the Norwegian position as related to Missouri, on the one

As the constituent bodies of the National Lutheran Council worked together on large and important tasks it became clear that it is virtually impossible to separate *res externae* from *res internae*, that *Life* and *Work* cannot be neatly isolated from *Faith* and *Order*. This difficulty reached a climax in connection with the Council's home missions program in wartime industrial centers. This task was seen as such an ambitious undertaking that it was deemed most advantageous for the Council to work out a program of action in co-operation with the various home mission boards represented in the Council's membership.³⁹ Accordingly, the executive committee of the Council met with representatives of the home mission boards at Columbus, Ohio, December 10, 1918. At this *Home Mission Conference* it was decided that the Council be requested to take up the work of home missions in government-controlled industrial centers, "provided, however, that it be the understanding that the work is to be turned over to the proper home mission boards as soon as it is found practicable."⁴⁰ To avoid overlapping, duplication, and wasteful competition in the whole area of Lutheran home missions, the question was raised regarding the possibility of creating a permanent agency in the Council for the co-ordination of home mission efforts among those belonging to the Council. Dr. Stub declared however, that a permanent home mission council would hardly be possible "until the various synods are willing to recognize each other as brethren in the faith."⁴¹ In response to the Norwegians' insistence for doctrinal clarification, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That we petition the National Lutheran Council to request all presidents of the various Synods represented in it, or that may be willing to co-operate, to appoint one or more members of their respective bodies, who shall constitute a joint committee to confer on questions of doctrine and practice with a view to the co-ordination of their home mission and other work.⁴²

In accordance with this resolution the *Joint Committee on Doctrine and Practice of the National Lutheran Council* was created, and held its first meeting at the LaSalle Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, March 11-13, 1919. A second meeting of this committee was held at the Edgewater

hand, and to the U. L. C. A., on the other, is presented in E. Clifford Nelson, *The Lutheran Church Among Norwegian-Americans*, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 287ff.

³⁹ *Annual Report of the National Lutheran Council*, November 6, 1919, p. 13f.

⁴⁰ *Minutes of Home Mission Conference*, Columbus, Ohio, December 10, 1918, p. 3, *Brandelle Collection*,

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Beach Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, January 26-28, 1920. These meetings are historically significant since they provided the occasion for the articulation of two distinct theological viewpoints which hitherto had not been clearly accented, but which became characteristic of the two dominant schools of thought in the National Lutheran Council and exerted a profound influence upon future developments within that body. At the meeting in 1919, the Augustana Synod was represented by Dr. G. A. Brandelle, Dr. S. G. Youngert, and Dr. O. J. Johnson.⁴³ At the meeting in 1920, the Augustana representatives were Drs. Brandelle and Youngert.⁴⁴

In preparation for the first meeting of the Joint Committee on Doctrine and Practice, the committee of presidents had decided to ask Dr. H. E. Jacobs of the United Lutheran Church, Dr. C. H. L. Schuette of the Joint Synod of Ohio, Dr. F. Richter of the Iowa Synod, and Dr. H. G. Stub of the Norwegian Lutheran Church "to prepare papers on the questions to be discussed from the point of view of their respective church bodies," and Dr. Frederick Knubel, president of the United Lutheran Church, had been requested to prepare a paper on the subject "The Essentials of a Catholic Spirit."⁴⁵

The paper by Stub, which was made the basis for discussion at the first meeting of the Joint Committee, delineated the Norwegian position, with which especially the Ohio and Iowa Synods evidenced a strong sympathy.⁴⁶ The papers of Knubel and Jacobs enunciated the theological principles to which the United Lutheran Church was committed and constituted the primary subject matter of the second meeting of the Joint Commission.⁴⁷

In his presentation Dr. Stub declared that the churches co-operating in the National Lutheran Council had been "thrown together" by the exigencies of the World War, but that this emergency association could make no claim "to be a body of men who had the right to

⁴³ *Minutes of the Joint Committee on Doctrine and Practice of the Lutheran bodies associated in the National Lutheran Council*, Chicago, Illinois, March 11-13, 1919, p. 1.

⁴⁴ *Minutes, Joint Conference on Doctrine and Practices*, Chicago, Illinois, January 27-28, 1920, p. 1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁶ This sympathy was based not only upon the fact that Ohio and Iowa shared in general the doctrinal viewpoint of the Norwegians, but also upon their antipathy toward the U. L. C. A. because of suspicions regarding the laxity of the old General Synod in theology and practice. See Fred W. Meuser, *The Formation of the American Lutheran Church*, Columbus, Ohio, 1958, pp. 149ff.

⁴⁷ See *Minutes* for the two meetings of the Joint Commission on Doctrine and Practice.

declare that the Lutheran bodies taking part, thereby had become one in faith and practice and therefore now at once could unite in permanent church work and co-ordination and co-operation in home and foreign mission work."⁴⁸ Before any serious consideration could be given to permanent co-operation and the establishment of real fellowship among the member bodies of the National Lutheran Council, it was imperative for them to agree regarding the following doctrines which had been the subjects of debate among Lutherans in America:

1. In regard to the work of Christ, redemption and reconciliation.
2. In regard to the gospel.
3. In regard to absolution.
4. In regard to Holy Baptism and the gospel.
5. In regard to justification.
6. In regard to faith.
7. In regard to conversion and repentance.
8. In regard to election.⁴⁹

Furthermore, said Dr. Stub, there must be agreement regarding practice, including strict application of the Galesburg Rule, *Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors only, Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only*, and the rigid exclusion of all forms of lodgery from the church. This statement by Dr. Stub regarding the principles of faith and practice became known as *The Chicago Theses*.⁵⁰

Although the representatives of the United Lutheran Church seem to have been less than enthusiastic about both the spirit and content of Dr. Stub's presentation, they signified their willingness to subscribe to the statement as a whole in order to submit it for consideration to the respective Synods of the Council.⁵¹

When the Joint Commission met for its second assembly in Chicago, January 27-28, 1920, it was Dr. Knubel's paper on "The Essentials of a Catholic Spirit" which was the major topic for discus-

⁴⁸ *Minutes of the Joint Committee on Doctrine and Practice*, Chicago, March 11-13, 1919, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20. Dr. Knubel is said to have been unhappy about the first meeting of the Joint Committee. He felt that the proceedings had given the impression that the United Lutheran Church must persuade other Council members of its confessional integrity. Writing to Stub, Knubel declared, "We are not on trial as Lutherans, and do not propose that we shall be on trial," and in a communication to Dr. T. E. Schmauk, Knubel stated that the representatives of the Joint Synod of Ohio had been particularly offensive in their attitude of hostility toward the U. L. C. A. See Nelson, *The Lutheran Church Among Norwegian-Americans*, *op. cit.*, footnote 30, p. 295.

sion. The report on this paper, presented by Dr. Charles M. Jacobs, was divided into five parts, and set forth the basic principles which in the author's opinion ought to characterize the attitude and approach of the Evangelical Lutheran Church regarding inter-Lutheran relations, organic union among Protestant churches, co-operative movements and false teachings.⁵² Part One, entitled, "Concerning the Catholic Spirit in the Church," declared that the essence of the Churches' catholicity is exhibited in the marks which distinguished it, namely, that it is *one, holy, catholic, and apostolic*. Such a Church expresses its true nature by:

1. Professing faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
2. Preaching the word of God and administering the sacraments so that faith is created by the Holy Spirit in human hearts and minds.
3. Performing works of serving love.
4. Creating a proper organization for these purposes.
5. Attempting to secure universal assent to its conception of Christian truth through a constant Christian witness.⁵³

The second section, dealing with relationships between groups of Christians each bearing the name of Church declared that such relationships must be defined in a spirit of catholicity.

Moved by that spirit, a Church will:

1. Seek to secure agreement with others in matters of doctrine, by declaring unequivocally what it believes concerning Christ and his gospel, and by endeavoring to show that it has placed the true interpretation upon that gospel.
2. Approach others without hostility, jealousy, suspicion, or pride, in the sincere and humble desire to render Christian service and with a genuine willingness to receive benefits in return.
3. Grant cordial recognition to all agreements which are discovered between its own interpretation of the gospel and that which others hold.
4. Seek to co-operate with others in works of serving love according to the teaching of Jesus in Mark 9:39f.⁵⁴

The third section, "Concerning the Relation of the Evangelical Lutheran Bodies to One Another," was a polite but firm rejection of the exclusiveness which characterized the traditional attitude of right-wing Lutheranism. The statement declared that,

⁵² Report of sub-committee, *Minutes of the Joint Conference on Doctrine and Practices*, January 27-28, 1920, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-17.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8f.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church Bodies represented in this conference recognize it as a fact that each of them subscribes to those Confessions of Faith which have always been, and still are, regarded as true standards of Evangelical Lutheran doctrine. No one of these Bodies has any reason to believe that any other subscribes to this Confession insincerely, or teaches any other doctrine than that set forth therein. We therefore declare that each of these bodies is in unity of the Lutheran faith with every other, and that these bodies together do form one Church, according to the principles set forth in the Augsburg Confession, Article VII, "To the unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments."⁵⁵

Section Four, "Concerning the Organic Union of Protestant Churches," declaring that until a more complete unity is attained among Protestants than now exists, the Evangelical Lutheran Church is duty bound to maintain a separate identity as a witness to the truth which it affirms.⁵⁶

The final section set forth the principle that co-operation could be given only when such activity did not involve, or seem to involve, a surrender or compromise of the evangelical faith; moreover, in view of the prevalence of doctrines which are subversive of Christian faith, clergy and congregations are solemnly warned against all God-denying, faith-destroying forces.⁵⁷

These were the principal affirmations of the Knubel-Jacobs Theses. Here was a theological viewpoint which staked out, so to speak, a new Lutheran position. It was confessional in every sense of the word, in that it subscribed, without reservation, to all the historic symbols of the Lutheran Church, without making distinctions between fundamental or nonfundamental doctrine, or quibbling about the degrees to which the confessions expressed the truth of the gospel. In this respect the Knubel-Jacobs statement was *conservatively* Lutheran. But it was a conservatism which sought, in the first place, to recognize and take into account the increased knowledge and understanding which theological scholarship had won since the time of the Reformation. In the second place, it was a conservatism which insisted upon distinguishing between biblically revealed doctrine, on the one hand, and theological refinements of such doctrines, on the other. The former were to be accepted as normative and binding, the latter were not. In the third place, this was a Lutheran confessional con-

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9f.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10f.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-17.

servatism which emphasized the catholicity of spirit which, it insisted, must characterize the mind and temper of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. This emphasis upon catholicity bequeathed to this viewpoint an ecumenical cast and tone which contrasted sharply with the exclusiveness and the fundamentalistic conservatism of the Norwegians and their allies. Thus, the "Knubel-Jacobs Theses" may be said to articulate an *ecumenical confessionalism*.⁵⁸

Against the "ecumenical confessionalism" of the United Lutheran Church representatives, Dr. Stub raised his voice in protest. He refused to identify himself with this brand of Lutheranism and justified his opposition on the following grounds:

1. The Knubel-Jacobs Theses were too lengthy and involved. Dr. Stub's own "Chicago Theses" were brief and simple, and therefore better suited as a confessional statement.
2. The Missouri Synod, through its official paper, *Lehre und Wehre*, had approved the "Chicago Theses" of Stub, and such endorsement served as a public testimony to the genuinely Lutheran character of the Theses, giving hope for further Lutheran unity.
3. The Knubel-Jacobs Theses did not give a sufficiently clear witness to such doctrines as the Trinity, the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God, the Real Presence in the Supper. At least, the language employed by Knubel-Jacobs was not the traditional phraseology. The implication seems to have been that unorthodox terminology merely masked unorthodox theology.
4. The emphasis upon catholicity was contrary to the *Articles of Union* of the Norwegian Church, in that the Norwegians were committed to a policy of exclusiveness in relation to those with whom they differed in doctrine or practice. The ecumenical spirit of the Knubel-Jacobs Theses were said to point in the direction of "unionism."⁵⁹

Thus, both in his own "Chicago Theses," and in his remarks connected with the discussion of the "Knubel-Jacobs Theses," H. G. Stub articulated the viewpoint in the National Lutheran Council which represented a close alliance with *repristination confessionalism*. It was a viewpoint which insisted upon a spirit of exclusiveness in relation to

⁵⁸ It has been pointed out that this *ecumenical confessionalism* was, in part, the result of the Erlangen theology, through the influence of Charles M. Jacobs. See Nelson, *op. cit.*, note 31, p. 295. According to Dr. Theodore Tappert, professor at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, the theology emanating from Sweden, particularly as expressed in Nathan Söderblom's viewpoint, had exerted a similar influence upon east coast Lutheranism. Interview with Dr. Tappert.

⁵⁹ *Minutes of Joint Conference on Doctrine and Practice*, January 27-28, 1920, pp. 18ff.

all who differed, whether they be Lutherans or non-Lutherans; it affirmed not only the historic Lutheran confessions, but Missouri-like, insisted upon agreement in extraconfessional refinements of doctrines; and it demanded virtually complete uniformity in church practice. Thus, because it insisted upon a restricted frame of reference regarding doctrinal formulation, and was highly selective in the establishment of relationships, this viewpoint may be called *exclusive confessionalism*, in contradistinction to the *ecumenical confessionalism* of Knubel-Jacobs.

With these two points of view now drawn out into the open, the lines of cleavage within the National Lutheran Council were clear. After some quiet negotiations among the members of the Joint Committee served to draw the opposing camps no closer together, the committee of presidents, sometime during the spring of 1920, decided to "abandon the conference on doctrine and practice for the present."⁶⁰ With this decision, the efforts to unify the National Lutheran Council came to an end. Henceforth, the Council was an association of Lutherans divided into two distinct and self-conscious parties, working and living together under a somewhat uneasy truce.

The "Chicago Theses" of Stub, for some unknown reason, were not submitted for approval to the convention of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, and therefore were not adopted by that body. The "Knubel-Jacobs Theses," however, became the basis for the famous *Washington Declaration* of the United Lutheran Church, adopted at the second biennial convention of that body in Washington, D. C., October 19-27, 1920. The Washington Declaration, in the spirit of the "Knubel-Jacobs Theses," enunciated the basic policies of the Church on language usage, relations with other Lutheran bodies, co-operation among Protestants in general and, by implication, expressed the mind of the Church on pulpit and altar fellowship and secret societies. Indeed, it may be said that the Washington Declaration was an extension of the "Knubel-Jacobs Theses," outlining basic principles concerning both the external and internal life of the United Lutheran Church.⁶¹

Furthermore, when the United Lutheran Church, at its eleventh biennial convention in Baltimore, Maryland, October, 1938, was moved to express its position regarding the doctrine of the Word, it did so by

⁶⁰ *Minutes of the Second Biennial Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America*, Washington, D. C., October 19-27, 1920, p. 85.

⁶¹ See Charles M. Jacobs, "The Washington Declaration: An Interpretation," *The Lutheran Church Review*, January 1921, pp. 1-21. See also Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

adopting a statement on "The Word of God and the Scriptures," known as *The Baltimore Declaration*. In this statement the Church set forth its interpretation of this central Lutheran doctrine in the same spirit, and based upon the same general principles which were expressed in both the original "Knubel-Jacobs Theses," and the Washington Declaration of 1920. Thus, the United Lutheran Church continued to affirm an "ecumenical confessionalism."⁶²

The Augustana Synod had virtually no part in the promulgation of the dual viewpoint which henceforth characterized the Council. Dr. Brandelle, the leading representative of Augustana in the affairs of the Council, was not a theologian, but a man of practical affairs. His interest in the Council was chiefly motivated by his concern for the practical benefits to be derived from co-operative endeavors.⁶³ Dr. S. G. Youngert, who also represented the Synod in the early years of the Council, was a man whose theological interest and training would have enabled him to participate in the discussion.⁶⁴ But when the theological lines were being drawn in the Council, Dr. Youngert was in Europe as a member of the Relief and Rehabilitation Committee, and therefore had neither the time nor opportunity to inject himself into the debate.⁶⁵ Dr. O. J. Johnson, the third Augustana representative at the first assembly of the Joint Committee on Doctrine and Practice, did not take an active part in subsequent developments of the Council.

Indeed, it may be said that for approximately the first ten years of the existence of the National Lutheran Council, the Augustana Synod occupied a somewhat neutral position in relation to the two viewpoints which divided the Council. It was wholly committed neither to one side or the other, yet, at various points, was sympathetic to both. For example, on the one hand, the historical background of Augustana, with its legacy of Rosenian toleration,⁶⁶ its long association with the General Council in important common endeavors, and the fact that the Swedish Lutherans had not experienced the severe

⁶² Cf. "A Symposium on the Baltimore Declaration," *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, Vol. 12, 1939, pp. 278-302.

⁶³ See his appeal to the Synod for ratification of plans for the establishment of the Council, *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1919, p. 25f. See also Andreen's estimate of Brandelle's practical churchmanship in *My Church*, Vol. XXII, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

⁶⁴ Dr. Youngert had been professor of Biblical Introduction and Greek New Testament Exegesis at Augustana Theological Seminary since 1901.

⁶⁵ Hauge, *op. cit.*, p. 43. See also *Minutes of the Executive Committee of the National Lutheran Council*, *Brandelle Collection*, Augustana Archives.

⁶⁶ *Supra*, Chapter I, p. 12.

fragmentation through theological controversy which had plagued both the Germans and Norwegians, tended to make Augustana somewhat insensitive to the rigid exclusiveness of the Norwegians and their allies. On the other hand, Augustana had voted for the Galesburg Rule when it was adopted by the General Council in 1875⁶⁷ and had endeavored to guard its pulpits and altars against those whose theology was unacceptable, for to depart from "the rule" was considered to be at least in some measure a denial of the true faith.⁶⁸ Similarly, regarding the question of lodgery, the Augustana Synod took its place among those who opposed "secret societies." Indeed, even from the early days of Esbjörn and Hasselquist, Augustana had warned its people against such associations.⁶⁹ And in 1894, the Synod specified what it meant by "secret societies" by declaring that

secret societies are those bound by oath, or which, on admittance of members, require promises akin to an oath; have religious ceremonies, but deny the fundamental truths of Christianity, especially the doctrine of the Trinity, and the person and work of Christ.⁷⁰

Against all such societies the Synod expressed unqualified opposition. Thus, the conservative practice advocated by the Norwegians struck a responsive chord in Augustana hearts, while the liberal practices in some sections of the United Lutheran Church were correspondingly repulsive to Augustana.

To assert, however, that Augustana occupied a relatively neutral position, and was not wholly committed to either the "exclusive confessionalism" of the Norwegians, on the one hand, or the "ecumenical confessionalism" of the United Lutheran Church, on the other, must not be understood to mean that Augustana stood exactly in the middle and neatly balanced one viewpoint off against the other. Indeed, for approximately the first twenty years of its association with the National Lutheran Council, the dominant sympathies of the Augustana Synod were undoubtedly on the side of the Norwegians and their ultraconservatism. These sympathies were expressed in Augustana's participation in the steps leading to, and acceptance of membership in, the *American Lutheran Conference*.

⁶⁷ *Protokoll*, Augustana Synod, 1875, pp. 13, 49, 51, 52.

⁶⁸ Cf. Mattson, *Polity*, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

⁶⁹ Cf. Ander, *Hasselquist*, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-203, 205-206.

⁷⁰ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1894, p. 76.

The Formation of the American Lutheran Conference

The National Lutheran Council provided a significant forum in which Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, and German Lutherans became acquainted with each other. Such acquaintance awakened the desire among these Lutherans for closer formal ties with each other.⁷¹ In 1920 the Joint Synod of Ohio initiated plans for bringing together the Norwegians and the Swedes with their own Church for the purpose of discussing closer fellowship of faith and practice.⁷² Augustana responded to this overture at its convention in Chicago, 1921, by electing Dr. G. A. Brandelle to head a committee to negotiate with Ohio.⁷³ Nothing, however, came of these first efforts, and the project for greater Lutheran unity was stalled until Dr. C. C. Hein succeeded Dr. C. H. L. Schuette, in 1924, as the new president of the Joint Synod of Ohio. Dr. Hein was the outspoken advocate of unity among "orthodox Lutherans" in America, and had been an active promoter of rapprochement between his own Church and the Missouri Synod.⁷⁴ Since both Hein and H. G. Stub of the Norwegian Lutheran Church were pro-Missourian in their theological outlook, they co-operated in laying plans for a possible rapprochement of their two Synods as a possible first step toward the union of "orthodox Lutheranism."⁷⁵ In these early plans for closer ties among "orthodox Lutherans," the Augustana Synod was not included, chiefly because the Ohio Synod questioned the orthodoxy of Augustana. This suspicion derived from the cordial reception Augustana had given to Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Sweden during his visit to America in 1923. Söderblom was looked upon by the ultraconservatives in America as a radical liberal who was more interested in comparative religion than confessional Lutheranism.⁷⁶ Söderblom had dedicated the new Seminary buildings in Rock Island, assisted in the installation of the re-elected synodical president, Dr. Brandelle, preached in numerous Augustana churches, and received an enthusiastic reception wherever he ap-

⁷¹ H. G. Stub, G. A. Brandelle, and C. H. L. Schuette met in Chicago, July, 1919, to discuss the possibilities of closer synodical relationships, and from various districts of the several Synods came resolutions urging the leaders to initiate steps leading to greater Lutheran unity. See Meuser, *op. cit.*, p. 236f.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 237.

⁷³ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1921, p. 176.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

⁷⁵ Regarding the pro-Missouri viewpoint of Stub and Hein see Nelson, *op. cit.*, footnote, p. 303. The preliminary negotiations between the two leaders is given in Meuser, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

⁷⁶ For the attitude of the Ohio Synod toward Söderblom, reflecting also the viewpoint of its allies, see Meuser, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

peared in the Synod. His invitation to participate in the forthcoming Stockholm Conference on Life and Work was readily accepted by Augustana.⁷⁷ Such hobnobbing with the primate of the Swedish Church was, in the eyes of America's ultraconservative Lutherans, "guilt by association," and placed Augustana in a compromising position. Suspicions of Augustana's orthodoxy were also based upon the Synod's continued co-operation with the United Lutheran Church on the foreign field of Rajahmundry, India, and in Lutheran Student Service here at home.⁷⁸

When H. G. Stub retired from the presidency of the Norwegian Church in 1925, and was succeeded by Dr. J. A. Aasgaard, Hein immediately invited the new Norwegian leader to attend a conference to be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, for the purpose of discussing the doctrinal basis for closer fellowship between the Joint Synod of Ohio, the Iowa Synod, the Buffalo Synod, and the Norwegian Lutheran Church.⁷⁹ The purpose of such an alignment was to be the creation, within the National Lutheran Council, of a conservative counterpoise to the alleged "liberal" and "modernist" United Lutheran Church.⁸⁰ Such a counterpoise was deemed necessary in order to effect "a defensive alliance . . . for the purpose of protecting its members against possible aggression by the United Lutheran Church and the Synodical Conference."⁸¹

The colloquy in Minneapolis was held November 18, 1925, and proved to be an exceedingly important occasion. By common consent the "Chicago Theses" which Dr. Stub had formulated in 1919 were made the basis for the discussion. To the original "Theses," both Dr. Stub and Dr. Hein had appended additional theses concerning the inspiration of Scripture, church fellowship, and secret societies, in the hope of winning the approval of Missouri, and of more clearly specifying the areas of their opposition to the "ecumenical confessionalism" of the United Lutheran Church.⁸²

The outcome of the Minneapolis colloquy was the promulgation of a document known as the "Minneapolis Theses," which constituted the theological consensus of the delegates and formed the platform upon the basis of which it was hoped a new Lutheran unity might be

⁷⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1924, p. 194.

⁷⁸ Meuser, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

⁷⁹ Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 303f.

⁸⁰ See correspondence between H. G. Stub and C. C. Hein, Meuser, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

⁸¹ Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

⁸² For an account of the Minneapolis colloquy see Meuser, *op. cit.*, pp. 235ff.

established. The "Minneapolis Theses" were virtually an elaboration and extension of the old "Chicago Theses" of Dr. Stub, and expressed the same "exclusive confessionalism" which the "Chicago Theses" enunciated. Regarding Scripture, the "Minneapolis Theses" declared the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the "divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God," and the norm of faith and practice. The term "inerrant" pointed in the direction of the doctrine of verbal inspiration and the denial of any error whatever in the biblical text. With reference to the Lutheran Confession, subscription was given to all the historic symbols of the Lutheran Church, "not insofar as, but because they are the presentation and explanation of the pure doctrine of the Word of God." On the subject of Church Fellowship, the "Theses" declared that co-operation "in the essential work of the Church presupposes unanimity in pure doctrine," and that where such unanimity is lacking, co-operation becomes "unionism," which is defined as "pretense of union which does not exist." Therefore Lutheran fellowship must be exclusive and strictly practiced in the spirit of the Galesburg Rule, rigorously rejecting all "unionism and syncretism." With respect to the Lodge Question, the "Theses" held that lodgery is a sin, and that no Lutheran Synod shall "tolerate pastors who have affiliated themselves with any anti-Christian society," and that all persons who are lodge members shall be urged to sever their connections with such organizations.⁸³

The articles on Church Fellowship and the Lodge Question were specifically aimed at the United Lutheran Church, and intended to draw a sharp line between the alleged "unionism" of the U.L.C.A., together with its toleration of lodge members, and the exclusivism and antilodgery of the pro-Missourian party.⁸⁴

Having come to unanimous theological agreement on the basis of subscription to the "Minneapolis Theses," the four synods consented

⁸³ Agreement of Representatives of the Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo Synods and the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (The Minneapolis Theses), *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*, January, 1941, pp. 13ff.

⁸⁴ The charge of unionism against U. L. C. A. was substantiated by pointing out that Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick had been invited in 1925 to preach in a U. L. C. A. church in Dayton, Ohio, and in the chapel at Wittenberg College. The participation of U. L. C. A. in the affairs of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, and in the ecumenical conferences at Stockholm and Lausanne, were said to be further evidences of "unionism." The most notorious example of lodgery in the U. L. C. A. but "by no means the only one," was Dr. V. G. A. Tressler, former president of the General Synod, and professor of New Testament studies at Hamma Divinity School, who was a high ranking Mason. For the attitude of the Ohio and Iowa Synods toward U. L. C. A. see Meuser, *op. cit.*, pp. 151, 233.

to extend altar and pulpit fellowship to each other.⁸⁵ It had been the hope of the leaders of this coalition, however, to enlist all of the members of the National Lutheran Council except the United Lutheran Church. To this end the Minneapolis colloquy moved to invite Augustana, the United Danish Church, and the Lutheran Free Church to join the ranks of those who subscribed to the "Minneapolis Theses." Dr. Hein was reported to have had serious misgivings about the orthodoxy of the Augustana Synod on the basis of "guilt by association" with both the United Lutheran Church and the National Church of Sweden, but was persuaded by Dr. Aasgaard to approve the invitation to Augustana.⁸⁶ On March 27, 1929, Dr. G. A. Brandelle and Dr. Hein had a private meeting during which the president of the Augustana Synod assured Dr. Hein that the relationship between Archbishop Söderblom and Augustana had been initiated by the archbishop and not by Augustana. Furthermore, Dr. Hein was given to understand that Augustana's reception of the distinguished guest from Sweden was a gesture of courtesy rather than an indication of agreement with Swedish faith and practice. Brandelle signified his own endorsement of the "Minneapolis Theses," and promised to recommend the document to the Synod for adoption, and thus to lead Augustana into active participation with this conservative coalition.⁸⁷

At the synodical convention, held in Rockford, Illinois, June, 1920, Dr. C. C. Hein was present and addressed the delegation, suggesting the creation of a special committee to negotiate with the Joint Synod of Ohio regarding altar and pulpit fellowship. This suggestion was accepted, and the special committee chosen to represent Augustana in these negotiations included the following: Dr. G. A. Brandelle, Dr. P. O. Bersell, Dr. C. F. Sandahl, and Dr. S. J. Sebelius.⁸⁸ On October 7, 1929, this Augustana committee met with representatives of the Joint Synod of Ohio and the Iowa Synod at Hotel Bismarck, Chicago, Illinois. By mutual consent the "Minneapolis Theses" were made the basis for the discussions, and the document was considered paragraph by paragraph, point by point. The Augustana committee found the "Theses" so completely acceptable that no changes or revisions were deemed

⁸⁵ Meuser, *op. cit.*, p. 241f.

⁸⁶ Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

⁸⁷ For the Brandelle-Hein meeting see Meuser, *op. cit.*, p. 243. The defensive and almost apologetic attitude of Brandelle in his meeting with Hein regarding Augustana's relationship to Söderblom is in sharp contrast with the hearty and enthusiastic spirit with which he announced the archbishop's impending visit in his annual message to the Synod in 1923. See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1923, p. 26.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

necessary, and "it was resolved that the presidents of the synods here represented be asked to present this agreement (for pulpit and altar fellowship on the basis of the Minneapolis Theses) to their respective synods for adoption."⁸⁹

The convention in 1929 which created the *Committee on Pulpit and Altar Fellowship*, also authorized the formation of a *Committee on Church Unity* which was requested to "confer with similar commissions of other general Lutheran bodies of America."⁹⁰ This committee was composed of Dr. G. A. Brandelle, Dr. P. A. Mattson and Dr. Abel Ahlquist, and laymen John A. Christenson of Chicago and Adolph F. Johnson of Jamestown, N. Y.

This committee met with representatives of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, Joint Synod of Ohio, Lutheran Free Church, Iowa Synod, and the United Danish Church "for the purpose of discussing the question of closer fellowship among these synods." It was at this meeting that the decision to invite Augustana to unite with the "exclusive confessional" party in the National Lutheran Council was implemented. The committee reported its action as follows:

After a comprehensive study of the situation, the proposition was made that these church bodies together with the Augustana Synod organize themselves into a church federation to be known as the American Lutheran Conference, the objective to be that of closer co-operation of these bodies in activities common to them, each body the while to retain its own corporate existence and independence as at present. The proposal was unanimously adopted.⁹¹

Thus, when the Augustana Synod met for its convention in 1930, it considered two separate reports, one from the Committee on Pulpit and Altar Fellowship, the other from the Committee on Church Unity, both of which endorsed the "Minneapolis Theses" and recommended that the Synod join forces with the signers of that document to form a new Lutheran coalition in America. On the basis of such recommendations the Synod took the following action:

Resolved: That . . . the Augustana Synod enter into pulpit and altar fellowship with the Joint Synod of Ohio. Resolved: That we as a Synod join with the American Lutheran Conference, to go into effect when three or more of the following groups unite, namely, The Norwegian Lutheran Church, The Joint Synod of Ohio, The

⁸⁹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1930, p. 225.

⁹⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1929, pp. 31, 223.

⁹¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1930, p. 225.

Lutheran Free Church, The Iowa Synod, The United Danish Church, and the Buffalo Synod.

We also heartily endorse the proposed constitution and by-laws of the American Lutheran Conference.⁹²

That this action by the Augustana Synod reflected the strongly conservative sympathies within its boundaries is undeniable. It is doubtful, however, that there was any deep or clear understanding among either the leaders or the rank and file of Augustana members regarding the fundamental theological issues involved in this alliance. Indeed, Augustana's concern at this point for Lutheran unity seems to have been chiefly a response to the mood of the times on the part of a religious and social group which, in the process of becoming Americanized, was achieving a new and exhilarating sense of community. This was a value which it deemed at once both spiritual and practical, in which it wished to participate. This is suggested by the fact that at the same time as the Augustana Committee on Church Unity was negotiating with the "exclusive confessionalists" and joining them in the formation of The American Lutheran Conference, designed as a counterpoise against the United Lutheran Church, it was also, with synodical approval, negotiating with the United Lutheran Church.

According to the report of the Committee on Church Unity, this committee met with a similar group from the United Lutheran Church in New York City, on January 17, 1930, and "after a full, frank and fair discussion of the question," every person participating, the following resolutions were passed without a dissenting vote:

Whereas we believe that the next step toward that more complete bringing together of all the General Lutheran Bodies in America, which so many dearly long for, should be a closer union of the Augustana Synod and the United Lutheran Church in America, be it

Resolved, that we, in joint session of the Commissions on Lutheran Church Unity of the Augustana Synod and of the United Lutheran Church in America, look with favor upon any measure that looks toward and may help forward such closer union or co-operation between these two bodies as may upon further study seem feasible.⁹³

At a second meeting of the representatives of Augustana and the United Lutheran Church regarding Church Unity, held in Chicago, Illinois, April 8, 1930, the question arose whether the ultimate objective

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 233. This action is also reported in *Journal of Theology of the American Lutheran Conference*, January, 1941, p. 22.

⁹³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1930, p. 226.

of the negotiations should be "methods of closer co-operation" or "organic union of the two bodies."⁹⁴ When this question was laid before the Synod, the Church responded by declaring that "The Synod desires that the committee should concern itself in the main with methods of closer co-operation of the Augustana Synod and the United Lutheran Church."⁹⁵ The negotiations between Augustana and the United Lutheran Church encountered only one really serious difficulty, and that was the lodge question. In this area of church practice Augustana opposed the tolerant policy of the United Lutheran Church. It was chiefly to this difference between the two bodies that Dr. P. O. Bersell referred in a speech he made on the convention floor when he expressed the opinion that if Augustana were to join the United Lutheran Church, the latter would soon have "a bad case of indigestion."⁹⁶ In spite of this disagreement in church practice, the Augustana Synod desired to continue to explore the possibilities for greater co-operation and fellowship with the United Lutheran Church.

In view of Augustana's decision to join the American Lutheran Conference, its determination to continue negotiations with the United Lutheran Church must not be understood as evidence of either inconsistency or insincerity. The endeavor to face, as it were, in two directions at once, was perhaps ingenuous and naïve, but even in these early stages of inter-Lutheran relationships, Augustana assayed the role of intermediary, hoping to become a bridge across which rapprochement between "exclusive confessionalism" and "ecumenical confessionalism" might be achieved.⁹⁷

On October 29-30, 1930, representatives of the Augustana Synod, the Iowa Synod, the Buffalo Synod, the Lutheran Free Church, the United Danish Church, and the Norwegian Lutheran Church, assembled in the Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and organized the *American Lutheran Conference*.⁹⁸ The purposes of the new federation, as stated in its constitution were two-fold:

1. Mutual counsel concerning faith, life and work of the church.
2. Co-operation in matters of common interest and responsibility, such as
 - a) Allocation of work in home missions fields.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁹⁶ Interview with Dr. P. O. Bersell.

⁹⁷ Letter from P. O. Bersell, February 26, 1962.

⁹⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1931, p. 23.

- b) Elementary and higher Christian education.
- c) Inner mission work (Christian Social Service)
- d) Student service in State Schools and Universities.
- e) Foreign Missions and other missionary activities.
- f) Joint publication of Christian literature.
- g) Periodic exchange of theological professors at the theological seminaries.
- h) Such other interests as from time to time may call for consideration.⁹⁹

Commissions were appointed by the Executive Committee to handle the various areas of responsibility. These commissions reported to the biennial conventions of the Conference. The Conference, however, did not find it possible to enter all the fields of activity outlined in the constitution, but did undertake a number of significant endeavors. Perhaps the most important work of the Conference was its service to Lutheran students in state schools and universities. In 1939, Pastor Fredrik A. Schiotz was called as full-time director of the Department of Student Service. During his first two years in office he traveled 95,632 miles and visited 204 college, university, and seminary campuses. Working wherever possible with L. S. A. A. groups, making contact with students through local congregations, and spending approximately \$5,000 a year in "grants-in-aid" to strengthen student work in centers of heavy Lutheran student population, the Student Service of the American Lutheran Conference rendered invaluable help in keeping young men and women vitally related to the church.¹⁰⁰ The annual inter-Lutheran seminars and preaching missions provided valuable opportunities for the exchange of ideas, and a broadened acquaintanceship across nationalistic and synodical lines. In 1936 the Conference began publication of a theological journal which became an effective organ for the enunciation of the ideals and objectives of the Conference.¹⁰¹ The Conference Commission on Social Relations instituted a number of fruitful studies which were aimed at helping the Lutheran Church in America become more acutely aware of the social implications of the gospel. The Commission on Parish Education created new interest and concern for a more effective program of religious education instruction in the church and home, while a series

⁹⁹ Constitution and By-Laws of the American Lutheran Conference, *Journal of Theology of the American Lutheran Conference*, January, 1941, p. 25.

¹⁰⁰ Report of Director of Student Service, Fredrik A. Schiotz, *Proceedings of the Fifth Biennial Convention of the American Lutheran Conference*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 13-15, 1940.

¹⁰¹ From 1936 to 1944 the journal was known as *Journal of Theology of the American Lutheran Conference*, after 1944 it was called *The Lutheran Outlook*.

of mass meetings of Lutheran youth in metropolitan areas were a source of religious inspiration to thousands of young men and women across the land.¹⁰² But perhaps the greatest benefit which the American Lutheran Conference bequeathed to Lutheranism in America was the impulse it gave to Lutheran unity. F. W. Meuser has pointed out that never before in the history of the Lutheran Church in America had groups of such variety of language, history, custom, liturgy, piety, and polity been so closely drawn together.¹⁰³ For a period of twenty-four years the Conference engaged these disparate elements in a co-operating fellowship which laid much of the groundwork for a new sense of Lutheran community, out of which important organic mergers eventuated.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² See Reports of the Commissions in the *Minutes of the American Lutheran Conference*, especially for the anniversary years 1940 and 1950.

¹⁰³ Meuser, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

¹⁰⁴ The American Lutheran Conference provided the framework within which the bodies were first drawn together which finally formed the TALC merger in 1960.

The Contours of Community

ALTHOUGH THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP in the American Lutheran Conference may have been many and real, the Augustana Synod became increasingly restive in this association. In 1940, the president of the Augustana Church, Dr. P. O. Bersell, verbalized this Augustana dissatisfaction by pointing to three weaknesses which characterized the federation.

The first weakness, he declared, is that our fellowship has been more exclusive than inclusive. After ten years our family has not grown. . . . The movement to implement the American Lutheran Conference for action in the promotion of a greater Lutheran unity has failed so far. . . . The second weakness is that our organization produces little growth in numbers and strength. . . . The third weakness is that the spirit of our fellowship has not yet reached the broad bases of our church life. The majority of our people know little or nothing about the Conference.¹

Though Dr. Bersell's criticism of the American Lutheran Conference in 1940 dealt largely with *res externae*, this critique of externals was a symptom of a deeper and more serious dissatisfaction which had grown up within the Augustana Synod during the past several years. By 1940 Augustana was becoming aware of a new theological climate, the emergence of a type of theological outlook which was essentially incompatible with the "exclusive confessionalism" espoused by the American Lutheran Conference. This new theological orientation may be said to have its beginnings in the Synod about 1931-1932, although its rootage may go back a few years earlier. The center of its articulation was Augustana Theological Seminary.

Emergence of the New Outlook

The death of Dean Conrad Emil Lindberg in the summer of 1930 was the signal for change. Dr. Lindberg had been the head of the theological faculty since 1900, and had served his Church with great dis-

¹ P. O. Bersell, "Ten Years of Fellowship in the American Lutheran Conference." Proceedings of the Fifth Biennial Convention . . . American Lutheran Conference, *op. cit.*

tion. But during the last years of his life it was apparent that the theological seminary needed both new leadership and a new policy in the choice of instructors, so that professorial competence would be measured chiefly by excellence of academic training and achievement rather than by personal popularity or experience in church administration.² When the Board of Directors seemed hesitant to move boldly and decisively for the improvement of the institution, the seminary students virtually took matters into their own hands and demanded action.³ As a consequence of pressure from both inside and outside the theological seminary, four professors were relieved of their responsibilities at the end of the school year, 1930-1931, and were replaced by a new corps of teachers.⁴

The new corps of seminary professors included Conrad E. Bergendoff of Chicago, called as the new Dean of the Seminary and professor of systematic theology. Bergendoff had received part of his theological training at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, an institution founded by the General Council, and after the merger of 1918, under synodical control within the United Lutheran Church. He earned his Ph.D. degree at the University of Chicago, specializing in theological developments in Sweden. Alvin D. Mattson, professor of Christianity at Augustana College, was called to the Seminary as professor of Christian ethics and sociology. During graduate study at Yale University, Mattson had come under the influence of Professor Douglas Clyde Macintosh, Dwight professor of theology and philosophy of religion at Yale, who called himself a "critical monist," and insisted that evangelical Christian faith must take into ac-

² Dr. George M. Stephenson has pointed out that from 1900 to 1930, with one exception, no professor in the seminary possessed a bona fide Ph.D. degree, and that none had a distinguished book of research to his credit. The Synod was generally satisfied to elect to the theological faculty, pastors who had distinguished themselves as popular preachers or competent administrators of church affairs, but who could lay no claim to scholarly achievement. *"Religious Aspects . . . Immigration, op. cit., p. 342.*

³ Student action included appeals to pastors, petitions to the Board of Directors and the synodical officers, as well as pressure on the faculty.

⁴ See *Minutes* of the Board of Directors, Augustana College and Theological Seminary, August 6, 1930, February 25, 1931, June 2, 1931. The writer was a student at Augustana Seminary when the upheaval of 1930-31 and the change of instructors, 1931-32, occurred. Dr. S. G. Youngert moved to Waltham, Massachusetts, and was recalled for an interim period of teaching in 1936; Dr. O. N. Olson accepted a call to First Lutheran, Berwyn, Ill., Dr. A. T. Lundholm became pastor of the Lutheran congregation in Braham, Minnesota; and Professor John P. Milton accepted a call to the First Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minnesota. Disagreement between the Board and Professor Milton regarding contractual stipulations led to his retirement from the Seminary. See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1931, pp. 57, 59.

count the conclusions of critical scholarship in all phases of man's quest for knowledge, and that the church must become more keenly aware and deeply concerned about the social implications of the Christian gospel. A third member of the new team was Eric H. Wahlstrom, who had pursued graduate studies at Yale and Chicago in the field of New Testament language and literature. In the course of his studies he developed a special interest in the trends which characterized modern Swedish theology, with particular emphasis upon the so-called Lundensian school. The fourth member of the new staff was Carl A. Anderson, who had taken graduate work at the Universities of Wisconsin and Chicago in the field of Old Testament language and literature. A contemporary of these four men was Hjalmar W. Johnson, a scholar who spent a number of years as a teacher of philosophy and religion at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota, and Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, before being called to the seminary in 1944 as professor of the history and philosophy of religion. Johnson earned both the B.D. and Ph.D. degrees at Yale University, where he was strengthened in his conviction that there need be no ultimate clash between true scholarship and the essentials of evangelical Christian faith.

When these men began their work as the new intellectual leaders of the Augustana Synod, the climate into which they entered had been at least partially prepared for them by such independent and unconventional thinkers as Claus A. Wendell and C. J. Sodergren.⁵

For many years Wendell and Sodergren had been the gadflies of the Synod, heckling its comfortable traditionalism, and inviting both clergy and laity to think and to become aware of the religious currents of the day. As early as 1914 Dr. Sodergren had shocked some of his more conservative brethren by editorializing in the *Lutheran Companion* regarding the theory of evolution in the following words:

The time has arrived, it appears, for someone to say that the theory of evolution is not necessarily atheistic, and that it might be quite consistent with the Bible and with a Christian belief in God as the Creator of heaven and earth.⁶

In 1925 Sodergren published a book entitled, *Fundamentalists and Modernists*, in which he pleaded for an evangelical confessionalism which would repudiate the wooden literalism of the fundamentalists

⁵ Wendell was for many years pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, adjacent to the campus of the University of Minnesota and C. J. Sodergren taught in the Seminary from 1912 to 1920, after which he spent a number of years on the teaching staff of the Lutheran Bible Institute, Minneapolis.

⁶ *Lutheran Companion*, December 26, 1914.

as well as the Christ-denying liberalism of the modernists. He called for a Christianity which would seek to be relevant to its own day by becoming informed through both devotional and scholarly investigation.⁷ Not long afterward he wrote another book which included two challenging essays entitled, *Is the Bible Alive?* and *Is Jesus God?* This little book of 130 pages began with an attack on the theory of the verbal inspiration of the Bible, suggesting that to disregard the marks of humanity in the written Word is to tend toward docetism. He pointed out that those who make the theory of verbal inspiration a tenet of faith cannot call upon the Lutheran confessions for support, for the confessions posit no such doctrine. An informed evangelical understanding of both Christ and the Bible, declared Sodergren, must take into account the reality of the divine-human dimension of God's revelation.⁸

In 1923 Wendell published a much discussed book, entitled, *The Larger Vision*, in which he pleaded for a Christian approach not only to the theory of evolution, but also to other scientific conclusions which were based on careful investigation and demonstrable facts. Wendell declared that the truth which the scientists investigate derives from the same divine source which has given the world the eternal truth regarding Christ and His salvation.⁹ In 1930 Wendell contributed a chapter to the symposium edited by Vergilius Ferm,¹⁰ and entitled *What Is Lutheranism?* In his answer to this question Wendell summarized his viewpoint in the following paragraph:

Lutheranism then we should say, means three things: (1) It means adherence to the Confessions comprising the Book of Concord, not as so many cement walls for man's incarceration but as a witness to the faith of the fathers and a guide to their followers. (2) Faith in the Holy Scriptures, not as a fetish on the one hand nor a mere human document on the other, nor as an arsenal of theological polemics, nor as a textbook of history and natural science, but as the inspired Word of God whose purposes it is to make us wise unto salvation; and (3) Above all else, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, not as a mere reformer or teacher or "pattern for young men," but as the Redeemer of the world and the everlasting Rock upon which the church is built.¹¹

⁷ C. J. Sodergren, *Fundamentalists and Modernists*, Rock Island, 1925.

⁸ C. J. Sodergren, *Is the Bible Alive? Is Jesus God?* Rock Island, n. d.

⁹ C. A. Wendell, *The Larger Vision*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1925.

¹⁰ Vergilius Ferm was ordained by the Augustana Synod in 1919, but spent the greater part of his career as professor of philosophy at the College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio. His essential religious viewpoint, set forth in the final chapter of the symposium, is very similar to that of Wendell.

¹¹ *What Is Lutheranism? A Symposium in Interpretation*, edited by Vergilius Ferm, New York, 1930, p. 242.

Wendell's searching critique of the position of the ultraconservatives brought down upon his head the censure of many of his conservative brethren. The editor of *Augustana*, by leveling a scathing attack on Ferm, indirectly rebuked Wendell in an editorial review of the book.¹² In the *Bible Banner*, journal of the Lutheran Bible Institute, Dr. Adolf Hult, professor at Augustana Seminary, and Dr. Samuel Miller, head of the Institute, expressed unqualified disapproval of the sentiments put forth by Wendell and Ferm, and Miller asked for their expulsion from the Synod on the grounds of heresy.¹³

After the Augustana Synod joined the American Lutheran Conference, and by so doing espoused the "Minneapolis Theses" and the "exclusive confessionalism" which the theses enunciated, the earliest voices to be raised in serious protest to this viewpoint were those of C. J. Sodergren and C. A. Wendell. Writing in *The Augustana Quarterly*, in 1937, Dr. Sodergren declared:

In spite of appearance to the contrary, the present generation is deeply religious; but its spirit fails to find in the old forms the body in which it can dwell. But the reply to this prayer for the means of a daring adventure in faith—the reply of the established order—is only an exaggerated emphasis of the latter, of external observances, and of the old status quo. . . . While the priests of yesterday are looking backward to the past and laboring to conserve its values, the prophets of tomorrow are facing the future and trying to give direction to movements of today.¹⁴

When the Augustana Synod, at its convention in Omaha, Nebraska, June, 1937 censured and threatened to discipline a few clergymen who were said to have given insufficient attention to the "Minneapolis Theses" and inadequate obedience to the Galesburg Rule, Wendell's ire was raised.¹⁵ He went home and wrote a stinging article entitled "Whither Augustana?" which appeared in the *Lutheran Companion*, and which expressed the author's impatience with confessional rigidity. He declared:

Orthodoxy is good. It means adherence to the truth, and no sane man would willingly surrender that. But orthodoxy without love is dangerous. It provides fertile soil for bigotry, hatred, spiritual pride, self-conceit, and a score of other evils which hide the Holy One from the eyes of the world. It turns men into merci-

¹² See *Augustana*, July 17, 1930, p. 475.

¹³ *Bible Banner*, August, 1930, pp. 9-10, 10-12.

¹⁴ C. J. Sodergren, "The Dawn," *The Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, 1937, pp. 147ff.

¹⁵ See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1937, President's report, p. 20, and Resolutions, p. 39.

less heresy hunters, the most contemptible vermin on earth. It aligns us with the scribes and pharisees, the priests and high priests of the time of Jesus. Nobody ever questioned their orthodoxy, but because it was loveless, it blinded them to His divinity and made it easy for them to spike Him to a cross. We are not worried about the trumpet calls to orthodoxy which for some reason have begun to blare among us lately, but we do fear that the blare may drown out in our hearts the still small voice which prays for unity and peace and love among all Christ's disciples.¹⁶

The kind of informed and ecumenical Lutheranism represented by Sodergren and Wendell was essentially the outlook espoused by the new intellectual leadership of the Synod. Not long after being launched on their teaching careers, Bergendoff, Mattson, Wahlstrom, Johnson, and Anderson began to express in their classrooms and in the public press a viewpoint which in a singular manner they seemed to share, and which contrasted at many points with the prevailing "exclusive confessionalism," while it conformed in various important ways with "ecumenical confessionalism."¹⁷

It should be noted that the new theological outlook¹⁸ was not "repristination theology," in the sense that it did not seek simply to reproduce a seventeenth-century interpretation of sixteenth-century doctrine. And yet the new outlook was conservatively confessional in the sense that it made the Word of God normative for faith and practice, and accepted the historic symbols of the Lutheran Church as correct and faithful expositions of God's Word. Its conception, however, of what makes Scripture the Word of God differed markedly from the viewpoint implicit in the "Minneapolis Theses." While affirming the doctrine of the divine inspiration of Scripture, Augustana's new outlook repudiated the theory of verbal inspiration, and refused to acknowledge that either this formulation or any other theological formulae were necessarily synonymous with biblical revelation. The new outlook also repudiated the Missourian insistence that Lutheran unity must be achieved on the basis of a common acceptance of certain theological refinements added to the historic confessions, and on strict uniformity in church practice. There remained, however, in

¹⁶ *Lutheran Companion*, September 2, 1937.

¹⁷ While Bergendoff, Mattson, Wahlstrom, and Anderson spoke to the Church from the vantage point of theological professors, H. W. Johnson made his earlier contributions to the development of a new climate in the Synod as professor of Christianity and philosophy at Gustavus Adolphus College, 1925-1932, and at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, 1932-1934, 1936-1944.

¹⁸ The outlook was "new" only in the sense that it represented a new development in the Augustana Synod.

the new outlook a certain Rosenian piety which insisted that Christian faith is more than intellectual assent to doctrinal formulation, that it is above all else the experience of the redeeming grace of God in Christ.¹⁹ Indeed, like the Swedish heritage which deeply undergirded it, there was about the new Augustana outlook a breadth and amplitude which sought to discover larger dimensions of God's truth both in the witness of other Christians as well as in the critical disciplines of scholarship. These various characteristics are clearly articulated in the writings of the new theological mentors of the Augustana Church.

Architects of the New Outlook

Beginning about 1937, these writings appear with increasing frequency and were addressed to both the clergy and the laity of the Church. In *The Augustana Quarterly* for the first quarter of 1937, Bergendoff published an article entitled, "The Communion of Saints—A Lutheran Viewpoint," in which he is critical of the narrow way in which the Lutheran Church in general, and the Lutherans in America in particular, have interpreted the concept of *communio sanctorum*. The article suggests that the unity among Christians for which Christ prayed, and for which Lutherans profess to pray, cannot be realized by giving the concept of the *communion of saints* a *sectarian* interpretation that is to say, making it chiefly *exclusive*.²⁰ Later that year Bergendoff had another article in the same journal in which he discussed the relationship between the American Lutheran Conference and the United Lutheran Church in America. This article was one of the earliest attempts to find an acceptable basis for rapprochement between the two opposing schools of thought in the National Lutheran Council.²¹ In comparing the confessional articles of the two groups, Bergendoff claimed to find insufficient grounds for separation, but admits that wide divergences exist in the area of church practice. But the author's impatience with traditional exclusiveness is clearly evident in the article.²²

¹⁹ Every student at Augustana Seminary since 1932 is familiar with the oft-repeated phrase in the course on Christian Ethics, "God is not to be found at the end of a logical syllogism."

²⁰ Conrad Bergendoff, "The Communion of Saints—A Lutheran Viewpoint," *The Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, 1937, pp. 3ff.

²¹ Conrad Bergendoff, "The Relationship Between The American Lutheran Conference and the United Lutheran Church in America," *Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, 1937, pp. 318ff.

²² In view of the sharp contrast between the "Minneapolis Theses" and the

Furthermore, when Bergendoff returned home after attending the ecumenical conferences on "Life and Work" and "Faith and Order," in Oxford, England, and Edinburgh, Scotland, he reported his experiences to the entire Synod through columns of the *Lutheran Companion*.²³ Seeking to inform the Augustana constituency regarding the ecumenical movement, and interpret to them its essential character, aims, and purposes, Bergendoff pleaded for an increase of the ecumenical spirit throughout the Synod and greater synodical participation in the ecumenical program. Striking out at sectarian exclusiveness, he declared,

No one part of the church is asked to compromise in the least on the position it holds in its faith or principles. There is a common recognition that the church of Jesus Christ is greater than any one part of the church, and that the Body of Christ has many members. Here is an opportunity for each church to testify to the truth that is hers, and to contribute to the purifying, the strengthening, the encouragement of the whole.²⁴

One of the clearest and most forthright statements of Augustana's new outlook was presented by Bergendoff in an article in the *Lutheran Companion*, under title, "Here We Stand." Addressed as an open letter to the clergy of the Missouri Synod, it set forth the chief points of difference between Missouri and the emerging viewpoint of Augustana. Regarding the doctrine of election, the author declared that any "neat" explanation, such as C. F. W. Walther had expounded, "Does not explain but only confuses." A doctrine which is open to so much question must not become a cause for disunity among Lutherans. On the question of biblical inspiration, Bergendoff declared that "Augustana is not one whit behind the Missouri Synod in saying that the Bible is the Word of God. But we have not officially formulated a real theory

"Knubel-Jacobs Theses" on a number of important points, not least the matter of inspiration of Scripture, it is difficult to understand Bergendoff's statement in the article that "No disagreement is perceptible between the doctrinal positions of the two bodies," p. 319; and "As far as doctrine is concerned the two bodies may be considered as united in faith," p. 321.

²³ By 1937 the *Lutheran Companion* was being sent to every section, if not to every congregation, of the Augustana Synod.

²⁴ Article, "Two World Conventions," *Lutheran Companion*, August 5, 1937. The Oxford-Edinburgh Conferences were also well reported by Pastor Clifford A. Nelson, Dr. E. E. Ryden, and others, all of whom sought to bring the modern ecumenical movement to the attention of the Augustana Synod, with the full approval of the synodical administration. See *Lutheran Companion*, August 26, 1937, September 16, 1937, September 23, 1937. For Bergendoff's statement to the Federal Council of Churches regarding his proposal for a unity in which Lutherans can participate, see "What Kind of Unity," *Lutheran Companion*, March 2, 1939.

of inspiration." It was on the question of fellowship, however, that Bergendoff most sharply rebuked the sectarian spirit of Missouri. He said,

I question the method of attaining fellowship which consists in one party offering a document to the other to be signed on the dotted line. Indeed, it is my contention that we are to meet each other as Lutherans, and not as suppliants asking for the right to be called Lutheran by others who have decided what Lutheranism is. . . . I believe I speak truly when I say that many Lutherans in America do not accept the Missouri Synod as a judge of their faith or of their Lutheranism. You treat us as nonLutherans. We resent it. . . . Insistent as the Synod has always been on the faithfulness of the church to her confessions, Augustana has wanted fellowship with other Lutherans in this country who also accept those confessions as basic to their ministry. . . . Some of the things which are said by the Missouri Synod spokesmen regarding the Church of Sweden are neither true nor charitable. . . . When therefore you hear it claimed that Augustana is too friendly with the Church of Sweden for fellowship with the Missouri Synod, I would ask you to remember that someone is not clear in his thinking and is asking us to commit a violation of the commandment which bids us honor father and mother, if he asks us to forsake connection with that church. There are men in Sweden with whom we have no theological sympathy, but there are many more men of high and low position whom we consider among the finest examples of Lutheranism in the world today.²⁵

A few years later, Bergendoff published a book bearing the title, *Christ as Authority*. This study reflects the rich contributions which Swedish theology had made to the religious thought of the author, and the following lines indicate his concern for the emergence among all Lutherans of a sound "ecumenical confessionalism":

I am not asking for any compromise of anyone's convictions. Nor do I demand that any shall change the faith they hold to as dearer than life itself. But I am saying that having confessed our faith is not enough. And if our faith has isolated us from other Christians, we are far indeed from the fulness of God. . . . If it is a sin of omission not to bear witness to the Christ who has saved us, then it is also a sin of omission for churches not to bear witness before the world that they have but one church.²⁶

²⁵ Conrad Bergendoff, "Here We Stand," *Lutheran Companion*, March 30, 1939.

²⁶ Conrad Bergendoff, *Christ as Authority*, Rock Island, 1947, p. 137. This same ecumenical emphasis is reiterated in the Hoover Lectures which Bergendoff delivered in 1953, and in which he declared "Christians have no scriptural right to deny the name of fellow Christian to those who bear witness to Christ as their Lord and Savior. The love that we owe the household of faith cannot be confined within the walls of that room which we occupy in the household." Conrad Bergendoff, *The One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church*,

While Bergendoff may be said to represent the ecumenical emphasis in the new outlook which was being urged upon the Augustana Synod, each of his colleagues was making his own contribution. In 1938, A. D. Mattson published his *Christian Ethics* which was widely hailed as a significant and important work in this field of theological study.²⁷ In the preface the author states that the book was "based upon lecture notes which have accumulated over a period of years in connection with work in the classroom." Which is to say that the book reflected what Mattson had been saying for several years in college and seminary classrooms as well as in public lectures.

Although the study is significant as an expression of the growth and development of liberal social thought and ideas among Lutherans in America, this is not the point of affinity between A. D. Mattson and his colleagues in the college and seminary. The study, with respect to the new Augustana outlook, was significant because of what it said regarding certain disputed theological doctrines, particularly the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. Mattson defined inspiration as "the quickening of man's powers by the Spirit of God."²⁸ This must not be understood to mean that God has dictated the forms of speech and language, nor chosen specific words, phrases or sentences which constituted the original text of Scripture. He has moved spiritually sensitive and discerning individuals to give utterance, in their own way and in their own words, to their understanding of God and his will, and such utterances will bear the marks of both divinity and humanity.²⁹ On the basis of this concept of inspiration, Mattson rejected the doctrine of verbal inspiration in the following words:

The Bible nowhere claims verbal inspiration for itself, the facts do not substantiate the theory, and if we analyze the implications of the theory, it robs us of any certainty we may have as to the inspiration of the Bible. The Spirit of God quickened and guided human souls and thus inspired the Scriptures, but this does not

Rock Island, Illinois, 1954, p. 89. For his distinction between "unionism" and true Christian unity see Bergendoff's Holman lecture, given at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, May 10, 1939, entitled, "The True Unity of the Church," *The Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. XII, July, 1939, pp. 257ff.

²⁷ A. D. Mattson, *Christian Ethics*, Rock Island, Illinois, 1938. Of this book Luther A. Weigle, Dean of Yale Divinity School said, "I am greatly pleased with this book. . . . The author has done a valiant service on the Christian side of the battle between Christian faith and paganism." Professor Nils F. S. Ferre of Andover Newton Theological School declared, "Next semester I am going to depart from my custom and require every one of the sixty-four students in my class to read *Christian Ethics* by A. D. Mattson." Favorable reviews also appeared in the church press.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

²⁹ See Mattson's discussion on "The Nature of Revelation," pp. 86ff.

imply verbal dictation or inspiration with respect to exact words. Neither does it insure freedom from errors of memory, accuracy of historical detail, or scientific fact. When the Holy Spirit led men to receive a revelation, He gave all the inspiration necessary, and under all circumstances we shall have to be content with what He has done.³⁰

In his exegetical Bible courses in the college and seminary, Mattson also reflected his differences with "exclusive confessionalism," as he sought to take into account not only the investigations of the higher and lower critics, but the conclusions of scholarship in other fields of study as these might impinge upon the Christian faith.³¹

Eric H. Wahlstrom made his contribution to the new outlook as a New Testament scholar, and had, therefore, a special interest in fostering in the Synod what seemed to him an acceptable conception of the Word of God. Any discussion of the Word of God inevitably involves the question of the relationship of Scriptures to revelation, and this leads to a consideration of the question of inspiration. Wahlstrom held that to get the right answers in the vital matter of religion, one must ask the right questions. "A wrong question," said he, "will elicit the wrong answer."³² To ask, "Is every word of the Bible inspired, or are only certain portions of it inspired?" is to pose the wrong kind of question, since it leaves room for no acceptable alternatives. The correct formulation regarding the inspiration of Scripture is, "Does the living God speak to men in the present through the whole of sacred Scripture?"³³ To such a question Christian faith can give a clear and unequivocal affirmative answer. But to speak of "the whole Bible" as being God's Word does not mean that every word or every part is of equal significance. Depending upon circumstances, one part of the Bible becomes God's compelling word of truth and revelation at one time, and some other at another. Thus, the whole Bible can and does speak to men in various and sundry circumstances of life. When the Bible is viewed from this angle, Scripture becomes "the living and contemporaneous Word of God; the believer is freed from the tyranny of literalism, and the Word becomes a dynamic and personal message from the living God."³⁴ God speaks in and through the entire Bible, and yet the entire Bible bears upon each page the imprint of the human

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

³¹ In his lectures and writings he sought to point out the relevance of the gospel to both science and the ethical challenge of communism.

³² Eric H. Wahlstrom, "The Word of God," *The Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. XXVII, January, 1940, pp. 14ff.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18f.

instrument through whom God has chosen to make himself known to man. As in the Incarnation, God chooses always to leave inviolate the means of His grace. Thus, as the humanity of Christ was a real and true humanity, so also the writers of the sacred text were men who used their abilities to state in their own way their experience and understanding of God. This is true not only of the writers of the autographs, but of all copies and versions, for God speaks just as effectively through the copies as though the original texts.³⁵

It is this insight which illumines Wahlstrom's discussion of the means of grace and the church. He insists that any tendency to apothéosize the Scriptures, the church or the sacraments so as to lose sight of or deny the earthly or human elements involved therein, is to misinterpret and misunderstand both God's Word and His activity.³⁶ It is in the light of this premise that Wahlstrom's book, *The New Life in Christ*, must be understood. Paul uses the experiences of everyday Jewish and Roman life to present the gospel of salvation in Christ. These figures of speech, full of the earth whence they derive, nonetheless carry the proposed revelation of the living God, and point to the Christian way of life with its "otherworldly" standards.³⁷

Hjalmar W. Johnson, in a bold move, laid the issue of the inspiration of Scripture on the very doorstep of the American Lutheran Conference by publishing an article in the *Journal of The American Lutheran Conference* for 1939 entitled "Some Thoughts on Inspiration." Johnson candidly ventilated both the pros and the cons regarding the theory of verbal inspiration. But he minced no words in setting forth his own views in the matter, as he declared,

Whether or not all Lutheran ministers are actually Lutheran in their understanding and personal acceptance of the fact that the Lutheran Church does not officially teach the verbal inspiration theory and does not officially teach any other man-made theory of inspiration is a question which merits consideration. Are there Lutheran ministers who sincerely believe that the genuinely Lutheran position in the subject of inspiration is too liberal? You sometimes hear conscientious Lutheran pastors make the statement that unless you accept the verbal inspiration theory you are not a consistent Lutheran. What can be done to help such brethren realize that such statements are by no means a defense of Lutheranism, but on the contrary constitute a lapse from it? . . .

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³⁶ This presupposition underlies Wahlstrom's discussion in his *The Church and the Means of Grace*, Chicago, Illinois, 1949, pp. 31ff. See also "The Nature of the Church," *The Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. XIX, 1940, pp. 117ff.

³⁷ Eric H. Wahlstrom, *The New Life in Christ*, Philadelphia, 1950, especially chapters II-V.

It is because of her doctrine that the Bible is a means of grace, but is not the grace itself that the genuinely Lutheran Church may not justly be accused of Bibliolatry. She highly exalts the means and yet definitely subordinates the means to the grace. We must not fail to understand the Lutheran distinction between the grace and the means of grace.³⁸

This was a challenge which the conservative editor of the *Journal*, Dr. J. A. Dell, could not ignore. Therefore, at the conclusion of Dr. Johnson's article, he appended an "Addendum," which was almost half the length of Dr. Johnson's original article. In this Addendum Dr. Dell took Johnson to task for questioning the validity of the theory of verbal inspiration. "Verbal inspiration and inspiration are the same thing," cried Dr. Dell. "If the Bible is inspired it is verbally inspired. If it is not verbally inspired, it is not inspired at all."³⁹ After voicing the dark suspicion that Dr. Johnson also harbored notions in sympathy with "the theory of evolution," Editor Dell concluded the Addendum by declaring,

I could say a great deal more, but I desist. The article by Dr. Johnson is being printed because pressure was brought to bear by his brethren (sic). But I could not let it go as an expression of the faith of the American Lutheran Conference. I could not pass by without challenging the condescending statement that brethren who believe in verbal inspiration—who believe, in other words, that the Bible is a reliable record of revealed truth—should be corrected in their Lutheranism.⁴⁰

It is not without significance that a theologian who had so openly and forthrightly challenged one of the basic premises of "exclusive confessionalism" in 1939, was called to a professorship at Augustana Theological Seminary in 1944. When Dr. Johnson was officially installed as permanent professor of the history and philosophy of religion in 1947, his inaugural address was entitled, "The Realism of Faith." This address affirmed the same principles, expressed the same suspicions of dogmatism of forms and theories, and reflected the same basic theological outlook which Johnson set forth in his article in the *Journal* a number of years earlier.⁴¹

Carl A. Anderson, who also participated to some extent in giving shape to the new outlook, was perhaps the most conservative member

³⁸ Hjalmar W. Johnson, "Some Thoughts on Inspiration," *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*, Vol. 4, May, 1939, pp. 11-32.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁴¹ Hjalmar W. Johnson, "The Realism of Faith," *The Augustana Quarterly*, Vol. XXVII, January, 1948, pp. 3-13.

of the team of theological leaders in the Synod, and his contributions to the new development were given through his work in the seminary classroom and through lectures delivered throughout the Church on various aspects of the Old Testament. Anderson's basic approach to Scripture, his respect for critical Biblical scholarship, and his ecumenical spirit, identified him with the new school of theological thought in the Synod.

As the theological leaders of the Synod continued to articulate their viewpoint, others joined their ranks. Before his term of office was concluded in 1935, President Brandelle had become disillusioned with the exclusivism of the archconservatives, due largely to his conflict with Dr. F. Pfothenhauer, president of the Missouri Synod. Dr. Pfothenhauer severely criticized the American Lutheran Conference for permitting the Augustana Synod to become a member of the federation. Augustana, he claimed, was guilty of doctrinal laxity in its association with the Church of Sweden, and of undisciplined unionism in its association with Reformed Church in America.⁴² To this public accusation Brandelle responded by challenging Pfothenhauer to prove his allegations. In consequence of this exchange, an acrimonious correspondence ensued between the two men which alienated Brandelle and encouraged him to look with new favor upon the opponents of "exclusive Lutheranism."⁴³

Furthermore, Dr. E. E. Ryden, who was president of the American Lutheran Conference for several years, exerted a marked influence both by his own personal involvement, as well as by his editorial policy in the *Lutheran Companion*, on behalf of the growth of an ecumenical spirit in the Augustana Synod.⁴⁴ Dr. Ryden represented the Augustana Synod at a number of national and international Christian assemblies, participated in numerous ecumenical and co-operative endeavors, and thus by his own example promoted the growth of community in his own church. He also established an editorial policy for the *Lutheran Companion* which reflected his own ecumenical interest. The development of inter-Lutheran conversations, co-operative endeavors and alignments in the United States, as well as the various activities of the International Missionary Council, the Faith and Order and Life and Work movements, were fully reported to the people

⁴² See *The Lutheran Witness*, October 14, 1930, p. 342.

⁴³ See Brandelle-Pfothenhauer correspondence, *Brandelle Collection*, Augustana Archives.

⁴⁴ Dr. Ryden was editor of the *Lutheran Companion* from 1934 until 1961. He was also the editor of the *Lutheran Outlook*, journal of the American Lutheran Conference from 1943 to 1947.

of Augustana through the *Lutheran Companion*. Thus, the *Lutheran Companion* and its editor made a substantial contribution to the emergence of a climate throughout the Synod which was conducive and congenial toward the new outlook.

It is important, at this point, to recognize that it was chiefly the emergence of the new outlook, the new theological stance, of the Augustana Synod, which undergirded and basically motivated the growing dissatisfaction which the Synod felt in its association with the American Lutheran Conference. Indeed, the dissolution of the Conference in 1954, though due to several causes, may be attributed in part to the theological differences which underlay most of the other disagreements which divided the Conference.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, it is equally important to perceive that the new outlook was fundamentally an ecumenical point of view, that is to say, a confessionalism with a deep sense of Christian community which found it difficult to thrive in an atmosphere of exclusivism which not only sought to isolate Lutherans from non-Lutherans, but which divided Lutherans from each other. Among the various schools of Lutheran thought in America which came closest to resembling in content and spirit the new Augustana outlook was the "ecumenical confessionalism" enunciated in the Knuble-Jacobs Theses of 1919, and elaborated and explicated in the Washington Declaration of 1922, and espoused as the official theological position of the United Lutheran Church in America. When, therefore, the Augustana Synod was confronted in 1952 with the necessity of choosing whether to align itself with the proponents of "exclusive confessionalism" or the advocates of "ecumenical confessionalism," it chose the latter course, and thus determined its ultimate destiny. Thus, in some degree, the emergence of the new outlook may be seen as one of the very most important developments in the history of the Augustana Church.

The Community of World Lutheranism

The developing sense of community in the Augustana Synod was not limited to association with other Lutheran bodies in America. It embraced, as well, the establishment of new and vital bonds of fellowship with Lutherans in other parts of the world.

Shortly after the end of World War I, the National Lutheran Council suggested to the *General Evangelical Lutheran Conference*

⁴⁵ Such disagreements would include home mission co-operation, recognition of rights of territorial preemption, and attitude toward the National Lutheran Council.

of Europe,⁴⁶ and the smaller *German Lutheran League*⁴⁷ that in order to strengthen international Lutheranism a world convention of Lutherans ought to be held.⁴⁸ This suggestion was met with approval in both Europe and America, with the result that the first all-Lutheran conference was held in Eisenach, Germany, August 19-26, 1923. One hundred and fifty-one delegates, representing 65,000,000 Lutherans from twenty-two nations were present. Among them were Dr. G. A. Brandelle, Dr. S. J. Sebelius, and Dr. Mauritz Stolpe.⁴⁹ During the sessions at Eisenach, Lutherans from the four corners of the earth discovered a new sense of community among themselves in both faith and practice. In summarizing his impressions of the convention, Dr. Abdel Ross Wentz, in his closing address to the assembly, declared,

The first Ecumenical Council of the Lutheran Church has been a success. In the number of those who accepted the invitation to attend the convention, in the high degree of unanimity with which the appointed delegates were permitted to be present in person, in the devout spirit that characterized our success of worship, in the high grade of scholarship and churchmanship that characterized the prepared addresses of the convention, in the many personal contacts that were formed and in the general spirit of brotherly love and Christian fellowship that prevailed throughout . . . the first Ecumenical Council of the Lutheran Church has been a distinct success.⁵⁰

The Lutheran unity discovered at Eisenach was concretely expressed in the formation of the *Lutheran World Convention*, and in the issuance by the delegation of a statement on common faith and practice. The statement declared that,

The Lutheran World Convention acknowledges the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the only source and the infallible norm of all church teaching and practice, and sees in

⁴⁶ The European Conference was comprised mainly of representatives from the German state churches, but included also representation from Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and other states.

⁴⁷ *Lutherische Bund*, organized 1907 by the so-called "orthodox party" which withdrew from the G. E. L. C. because of doctrinal and practical disagreements.

⁴⁸ Hauge, *op. cit.*, p. 49; Wentz, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

⁴⁹ *Minutes, Addresses and Discussions, The Lutheran World Convention*, Eisenach, Germany, August 19-26, 1923, Philadelphia, 1923, Roll of representatives, pp. 16-19. See also *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1923, p. 169.

⁵⁰ *Minutes . . . The Lutheran World Convention*, Eisenach, Germany, 1923, *op. cit.*, p. 176. See also E. Theodore Bachmann, *Epic of Faith, The Background of the Second Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation*, New York, 1952, pp. 11-14.

the Lutheran Confessions, especially the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, a pure exposition of the Word of God.⁵¹

The Augustana delegation found the cordial international climate among Lutherans gathered at Eisenach congenial to their own taste and spirit. The *Convention* represented to them an area of fellowship which the Synod should enter wholeheartedly. This attitude is clearly reflected in the enthusiastic reports which they sent to the people back home through the columns of the church press.⁵²

The Lutheran World Convention met for its second assembly in Copenhagen, Denmark, June 26 to July 4, 1929, at which there were one hundred and forty-nine delegates present, representing forty-three Lutheran bodies from twenty-one countries. The Augustana Synod was officially represented by four delegates, two accredited press representatives, and six registered visitors, a total of twelve men, some of whom were accompanied by their wives.⁵³

Much of the work for European relief and rehabilitation was being assumed by agencies under the Lutheran World Convention. It was apparent, however, that the varied and often complicated tasks at hand required an international organization more effectively structured to meet these obligations than the *Convention* was proving to be. Thus, the executive committee suggested the inauguration of plans looking toward the revision of the existing *Convention*.⁵⁴ The third assembly of the Lutheran World Convention met in Paris, October 13-21, 1935. This assembly was designed as a "working convention" with a limited representation. Nevertheless, the Augustana Synod was represented at Paris by Dr. G. A. Brandelle and Dr. E. E. Ryden.⁵⁵ Both men reported their activities and the program of the

⁵¹ *Minutes . . . The Lutheran World Convention*, Eisenach, Germany, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁵² See for example, the article by Dr. Sebelius in *The Lutheran Companion*, October 6, 1923. See also *Lutheran Companion*, June 30 and October 6, 1923; *Augustana*, September 30, 1923.

⁵³ The delegates were Dr. G. A. Brandelle, Senator Henry N. Benson, St. Peter, Minnesota, Dr. A. T. Ekblad, Superior, Wisconsin, and Dr. O. N. Olson, Rock Island, Ill. Dr. L. G. Abrahamson and Dr. G. A. Andreen represented the press, and registered visitors included Pastors J. A. Eckstrom, J. E. Rydbeck, J. A. O. Landin, Gunnar Goranson, A. T. Bergquist, and Axel Berg. *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1929, p. 226. *Augustana*, August 8, 1929. *Lutheran Companion*, July 20, August 3, 17, 31, September 7, 1929. See also *Minutes, Addresses and Discussions, the Second Lutheran World Convention*, Copenhagen, Denmark, June 26-July 4, 1929, Philadelphia, 1930. Roll of Delegates, pp. 25-29.

⁵⁴ See "Report of the Executive Committee," *Minutes . . . The Second Lutheran World Convention*, *op. cit.*, pp. 159ff.

⁵⁵ *Lutherischer Weltkonvent*, Paris, MCMXXXV, Berlin, MCMXXXIX, Liste der Delegierten, p. 171.

convention to the people back home through the press. These reports not only chronicled the events that were transpiring, but also called upon the people of the Augustana Church to identify themselves with those who were willing and ready to sacrifice, work, and pray for the alleviation of human suffering and the furtherance of Christian—and particularly Lutheran—unity.⁵⁶

The fourth assembly of the Lutheran World Convention was scheduled to meet in Philadelphia, in 1940. But in 1939 the outbreak of World War II cancelled these plans. In the terrible years of the war, the Lutheran churches of the free world were confronted with unprecedented needs and demands. Orphaned missions, millions of homeless refugees, multitudes of naked and starving victims, devastated cities with bombed churches, scattered congregations and sick, distracted people, were just a few of the pressing problems which demanded immediate and decisive action. In this new and greater emergency the experiences gained through participation in the program of the Lutheran World Convention proved invaluable. But it was evident, too, that for the kind of long-range program which was needed, there must be a world-wide Lutheran federation which would be more closely geared to the current responsibilities than the World Convention had been.⁵⁷ Accordingly, a constitution which created *The Lutheran World Federation* was adopted at the assembly in Lund, Sweden, 1947, bringing into being a new international organization.⁵⁸ This new body included five national committees for over-all co-ordination, fifteen national study groups to ascertain what and where needs existed, fifteen special commissions to devise ways and means of meeting the needs, five service departments, including world missions, refugee services, inter-church aid, publication work, and information service. The entire program was under the direction of an executive director, whose board of directors was an executive committee elected by the Assembly itself. The first man to be named to the important post of executive director was an American pastor, a member of the American Lutheran Church, Dr. S. C. Michelfelder of Toledo, Ohio.⁵⁹ The Augustana Church was represented at Lund by

⁵⁶ *Lutheran Companion*, November 2, 9, 16, 30, 1935; *Augustana*, November 7, 14, 1935.

⁵⁷ *Proceedings of the Lutheran World Federation Assembly*, Lund, Sweden, June 30-July 6, 1947, Philadelphia, 1948. Report of the Executive Secretary, pp. 35ff.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-21.

⁵⁹ Michelfelder had represented the National Lutheran Council in Europe, with an office in Geneva, since 1945, and had headed the work of gathering and dispensing money, food and clothing for European relief. See *Epic of Faith*, op. cit., Chapter IV.

the following delegates, Dr. P. O. Bersell, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Dr. Clifford A. Nelson, and Dr. Wilton E. Bergstrand. In addition there were some twenty or more registered visitors from Augustana.⁶⁰ The keynote of the Lund Assembly was most effectively sounded by Dr. Ralph H. Long, executive secretary of the National Lutheran Council, who declared,

This is our day of grace, our great opportunity. Our task today is to arise and to stand together as brethren of a common faith. We must preserve the faith and fellowship of Lutherans around the world. We must strengthen the hearts and hands of our brethren who are sorely afflicted. We must carry on all the work that is under the banner of the Church of the Reformation on the world-wide fields of missionary endeavor. We must join hands with our Christian brothers in other evangelical churches to bring healing to all the world. This is our task.⁶¹

To this kind of challenge the Augustana Synod responded affirmatively by subscribing to the proposed constitution of the new Federation through the signature of its synodical president, Dr. P. O. Bersell, and thus becoming one of the charter members of The Lutheran World Federation.⁶² The Assembly also elected two Augustana men to important posts in the Federation. Dr. S. E. Engstrom, executive director of American Missions for the Augustana Church, was elected to serve on the *Commission for Evangelism and Stewardship*, and Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist was named to head the Federation's Press Committee and to serve as a member of the Committee on Reconstruction.⁶³ Through voluminous reports in the Augustana press the people of the Synod were kept informed regarding the Lund Assembly, and no effort was spared to interpret the meaning and significance of the events that transpired.⁶⁴

The second assembly of *The Lutheran World Federation* was held in Hannover Germany, July 25-August 3, 1952. The president of the Augustana Church, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, headed a delegation which included, Mrs. John S. Benson, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Dr. P. O. Bersell, Dr. S. E. Engstrom, Dr. Melvin Hammarberg, Dr. Emory Lind-

⁶⁰ *Proceedings of The Lutheran World Federation Assembly*, Lund, Sweden, *op. cit.*, List of Delegates, pp. 163-169, List of visitors, pp. 172-182.

⁶¹ *Proceedings . . . L. W. F. Assembly*, Lund, Sweden, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

⁶² A copy of the constitution with a photostatic reproduction of the signature, as well as a snapshot of Dr. P. O. Bersell signing his name to the new constitution on behalf of Augustana, are given in *Ibid.*, pp. 19 and 60.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 159, 160 and 161.

⁶⁴ *Augustana*, July 28, August 4, 11, 18, 1947; *Lutheran Companion*, July 16, 23, 30, August 6, 13, 27 and September 17, 1947.

quist, and Dr. Carl W. Segerhammar.⁶⁵ No previous world gathering of Lutherans had witnessed as strong American leadership as was evident at Hannover, and in this regard Augustana made notable contributions. The new executive secretary for the Federation was a member of the Augustana ministerium, Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist, who was named by the executive committee to this important post in world Lutheranism after the death of Dr. Michelfelder in the autumn of 1951. Dr. Oscar A. Benson was chosen as a member of the executive committee, Dr. P. O. Bersell was made a member of the business committee, and Dr. S. E. Engstrom was named as chairman of the nominating committee.⁶⁶ Again the Augustana press did an outstanding job in bringing to the people of the Synod a complete and interpretative report of the Assembly.⁶⁷

In view of the ecumenical nurture which the people of Augustana had been receiving since 1923, it was no wonder that a considerable number of Augustana folk took advantage of the opportunity of witnessing a world convention of the Lutheran Church when the *Lutheran World Federation* convened in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 15-25, 1957, for the third assembly. At this convention the Synod was represented by a delegation of eight members, headed by the president of the Church, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, and including Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Dr. Robert Holmen, Dr. Karl E. Mattson, Dr. O. Karl Olander, Pastor Carl Sodergren, Dr. Lael Westberg, and Miss Evelyn Stark. The list of official visitors numbered six, including Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, Dr. J. Sabin Swenson, Dr. Wendell Lund, Dr. Robert Mortvedt, Pastor Raymond Hedberg, and Mr. L. Milo Matson.⁶⁸ The Federation honored the Augustana Synod by re-electing Dr. Benson to a five-year term as a member of the executive committee, and Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist was returned to office as the Federation's executive secretary. Though the Augustana press gave the people of the Synod full reports on the great Minneapolis conclave, a good many Augustana folk made the journey to Minneapolis to see with their own eyes the historic sight of a world church gathered in solemn assembly.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ The Augustana contingent included also alternate delegates, Dr. O. V. Anderson, Dr. Victor E. Beck, Dr. Gustav Carlberg, Dr. Thorsten Gustafson, Dr. Conrad Hoyer, and Dr. T. E. Matson, and a group of official visitors numbering fifteen. *Proceedings of the Second Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation*, Hannover, Germany, July 25-August 3, 1952, pp. 179-198.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, List of L. W. F. officers and committee members, pp 175-177.

⁶⁷ *Lutheran Companion*, September 3, 10, 24, 1952; *Augustana*, August 11, September 8, 1952.

⁶⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1957, p. 105.

The Ecumenical Community

Perhaps the most dramatic evidence of the developing sense of community within the Augustana Synod is exhibited in the relationship of the Synod to the modern ecumenical movement.

As a consequence of new and powerful ecumenical impulses which emerged at the International Christian Conference at Edinburgh, Scotland, 1910, the Protestant Episcopal Church, which had taken a leading role at Edinburgh issued an invitation to virtually all Protestant groups in western Christendom to unite in a World Conference on Faith and Order. Such an invitation, dated, Boston, Massachusetts, April 4, 1911, and signed by Robert H. Gardiner, secretary of the Episcopal Commission on Faith and Order, was sent to Dr. Eric Norelius, president of the Augustana Synod. The curt reply which Norelius gave to this invitation left little doubt that both Norelius and his Church had slight interest in any talk about unity movements across denominational lines. Norelius' letter was as follows:

Vasa, Minnesota
April 11, 1911

Robert Gardiner
Secretary, World Conference on Faith and Order
Boston, Mass.
My Dear Sir:

Your communication of April 4th in regard to matters of your committee received. In reply to your inquiries, will say that the Augustana Synod of the Ev. Luth. Church in America, has no committee authorized to deal with any question in regard to the unity of different churches and I am sure that the Synod will not appoint any such committee. We certainly believe in Christian unity, and there has always been such a unity among true Christians and there will always continue to be such a union; but an outward union of different churches on a platform such as is proposed by the Episcopal Commission we consider to be futile and no union at all. Nevertheless, we shall always continue to pray for true Christian union and to preach the whole council [sic] of God unto salvation.

Yours very respectfully,
E. Norelius⁷⁰

⁶⁹ *Lutheran Companion*, June 19, August 7, 14, September 4, 11, 18, 25, 1957. *Augustana* was published as a monthly paper during 1956; the final number was issued December, 1956. See also *Proceedings of the Third Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 15-25, 1957.

⁷⁰ Full text of Gardiner-Norelius correspondence in *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1911, p. 36f.

In sharp contrast to the isolationist spirit of 1911 was the cordial temper of G. A. Brandelle and the receptive spirit of the Augustana Synod in 1924, when an invitation was received from Nathan Söderblom, archbishop of Sweden, to participate in the World Conference on Life and Work, scheduled to meet in Stockholm, August 19-30, 1925. Dr. Brandelle communicated to the archbishop his own and the Synod's enthusiastic readiness to take part in the forthcoming Conference, and Söderblom invited Dr. and Mrs. Brandelle to be his personal guests during the Conference.⁷¹

To be sure, an invitation to the Augustana Synod from Sweden's archbishop to participate in the ecumenical movement was quite a different matter than a similar invitation from the Episcopalians with whom the Augustana Synod on several occasions had experienced some difficulties. This fact may have had some effect in inclining the Synod in 1924 to regard the ecumenical movement more favorably than was the case in 1911. The reasons, however, for the contrast in attitude between Norelius and Brandelle undoubtedly go deeper than mere nationalistic prejudice. Between 1911 and 1924 World War I had destroyed the comfortable, stable world of earlier years. Problems of gigantic scope compelled Christian forces to pool their resources and close their ranks. Furthermore, by 1924 the Augustana Synod had emerged from its traditional position of nationalistic isolation, and had become an Americanized institution, sensitive to the world in which it lived, and eager to participate in the developments that were shaping the life of that day. And, finally, synodical leadership had become sympathetic to the major objectives of the ecumenical movement and sought to guide the Synod into ecumenical pathways.

Accordingly, when the Stockholm Conference opened in mid-August, 1925, the Augustana Synod was represented by the president, G. A. Brandelle and Pastor G. Rast of Litchfield, Minnesota.⁷² There were those in the Synod, however, who expressed grave apprehension about the Conference. A member of the theological faculty in Rock Island, for example, solemnly warned the Synod that entanglement with the ecumenical movement was so dangerous that "our Lu-

⁷¹ The Brandelle-Söderblom correspondence is preserved in the *Brandelle Collection*, Augustana Archives. For synodical action see *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1924, p. 194; 1925, p. 168. For a brief Swedish account of the development of cordial relations between the Augustana Synod and Nathan Söderblom see Nils Karlstrom, *Kristna samförståndssträvanden under världskriget*, 1914-1918, Stockholm, 1947, pp. 259ff.

⁷² G. K. A. Bell, *The Stockholm Conference*, 1925, London, 1925, List of delegates, p. 22.

theran faith is threatened," and he candidly identified himself "with those who are afraid to enter into close fellowship with people whose religious views and aims are suspicious to say the least. . . . There are those who fear that the Stockholm Conference is but a step in the direction of an ecumenical council on Faith and Order. If that be so . . . then let us pray God night and day that at least the Lutheran Church in America will have nothing to do with it."⁷³ This negative attitude was sharply countered by the editor of the Swedish *Augustana*, Dr. L. G. Abrahamson, who called upon the Synod to pray for the success of the Conference, and for all similar efforts to Christianize the existing social order.⁷⁴

Augustana was not represented at the First World Conference on Faith and Order which met at Lausanne, Switzerland, August 3-21, 1927.⁷⁵ When, however, the Second World Conference on Faith and Order convened in Edinburgh, Scotland, August 3-18, 1937, as a sequel to the Second World Conference on Life and Work, which met in Oxford, England, July 12-26, 1937, the Augustana Synod was represented at both assemblies by the following delegates: at Oxford, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Dr. Clifford A. Nelson with Pastor Wilbert E. Benson as alternate; at Edinburgh, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Dr. Alfred Bergin, Dr. Clifford A. Nelson, with Dr. Leonard Kendall, Pastor Wilbert E. Benson, and Professor Theodor LeVander as alternates.⁷⁶ At Oxford Dr. Bergendoff was a member of section IV which dealt with "The Church and Education," and Dr. Clifford A. Nelson served as a member of section II, which considered the subject, "Church and State."⁷⁷ At Edinburgh, Dr. Bergendoff was a member of Section II, which gave consideration to the topic, "The Church of Christ and the Word of God," and Dr. Nelson was a member of Section IV, which had for its topic "The Church's Unity in Life and Worship."⁷⁸ Thus, it was at Oxford and Edinburgh, 1937, that the Augustana Church identified itself with the mainstream of the modern ecumenical movement, including both Life and Work as well as Faith and Order. In

⁷³ Professor S. J. Sebelius, *Lutheran Companion*, August 8, 1925.

⁷⁴ *Augustana*, September 17, 1925, editorial by L. G. A.

⁷⁵ *Proceedings of the World Conference on Faith and Order*, Lausanne, August 3-21, 1927. New York, 1927, list of churches represented at Lausanne, pp. 527-530, List of delegates, pp. 508-526.

⁷⁶ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1937, p. 33f. See also, Leonard Hodgson, *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order*, Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937, London; 1938, Appendix III, pp. 290-305. J. H. Oldham, *The Oxford Conference, Official Report*, New York, 1937, Appendix F, pp. 283-290.

⁷⁷ J. H. Oldham, *op. cit.*, pp. 284, 287.

⁷⁸ Hodgson, *op. cit.*, pp. 308, 309

their reports to the Augustana Synod, through the columns of *Augustana* and the *Lutheran Companion*, the delegates provided the kind of information and orientation which fostered a broadening sense of Christian community throughout the Synod.⁷⁹

After World War II, when the three tributaries of the modern ecumenical movement, the International Missionary Council, the Life and Work movement, and the Faith and Order movement, united at the Amsterdam Assembly, August 22-September 4, 1948, to form the *World Council of Churches*, the Augustana Church was represented and took an active part in the developments.⁸⁰ The Augustana delegation to Amsterdam was headed by the president of the Church, Dr. P. O. Bersell, and included Prof. N. A. Nilson, with Dr. E. E. Ryden and Professor Theodor LeVander as alternates. Accredited visitors from Augustana included Mrs. Daniel Martin and Mr. Otto Leonardson.⁸¹ It was with a deep sense of satisfaction that the people of the Augustana Church learned through the press that the World Council had honored the Synod by electing Dr. Bersell to membership on the executive committee, and had appointed him to serve also on the credentials committee.⁸² Indeed, the people back home were told not only of the highlights, but the whole program of the Assembly was expertly reported in the Augustana press, and in greater detail than any previous ecumenical gathering.⁸³

Between the first and second assemblies of the World Council, the *Third World Conference on Faith and Order* was held in Lund, Sweden, August 15-21, 1952. To this conference which was aimed at dis-

⁷⁹ See for example Bergendoff's analytical discussion of the ecumenical movement in two articles in the *Lutheran Companion*, August 5 and 26, 1937. For other excellent reports by Dr. C. A. Nelson, Prof. LeVander and others, see *Lutheran Companion*, September 2, 16, 23, 30, 1937. *Augustana*, August 17, September 14, 1937.

⁸⁰ *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, Amsterdam, Holland, August 22-September 4, 1948, ed. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, New York, 1949, Appendix II, p. 233.

⁸¹ Unofficial visitors included Mrs. Otto Leonardson, Mrs. E. E. Ryden, Miss Alva Magnusson, Mrs. N. A. Nilson, Mrs. P. O. Bersell, Dr. Wilton E. Bergstrand, Dr. Ernest A. Lack, Pastor Daniel T. Martin, and Dr. Otto Bostrom, see *Augustana*, October 18, 1948. See also *Ibid.*, Appendix III, p. 245.

⁸² *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches* . . . Amsterdam, *op. cit.*, p. 224. *Lutheran Companion*, September 22, 1948.

⁸³ *Lutheran Companion*, August 4, 11, 18, September 1, 15, 22, 29, October 13, 1948. *Augustana*, August 23, September 27, October 11, 18, 1948. A particularly interesting and informative report of the meaning and significance of the Amsterdam Assembly and the new World Council of Churches was given by Dr. P. O. Bersell in *Augustana*, October 18, 1948. See also Swedish translation of article by Conrad Bergendoff, "Westphalia to Amsterdam," which first appeared in *The Christian Century* for August 11, 1948, in *Augustana*, August 23, 1948.

covering deeper insights into the nature and mission of the church, the Augustana Church sent two of its most able theologians, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff and Dr. Eric H. Wahlstrom.⁸⁴ The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which met in Evanston, Illinois, Augustana 15-31, 1954, however, saw the Augustana Synod represented by a delegation of four, headed by the president of the Church, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, and including Dr. P. O. Bersell and two laymen, Dr. Wendell Lund and Mr. Solomon Eliufoo.⁸⁵ For the first time the younger churches of the Augustana mission field were represented at a world council, in the person of Mr. Eliufoo, a native from Tanganyika, East Africa. For the first time, too, the people of the Synod could drive to an American city and see for themselves the pageantry of a world conclave, and sense something of the drama of a Christian community which transcends all human boundaries. Scores of Augustana folk from near and far were seen in Evanston during the days of the great assembly.⁸⁶

The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which met in New Delhi, India, November 19-December 6, 1961, provided the Augustana Church with its last opportunity to participate as an independent church body in the affairs of the ecumenical movement. Before another Assembly would convene, the Augustana Church would have given up its corporate identity to become a part of the new *Lutheran Church in America*. As its last representatives to a world assembly the Church sent a delegation headed by its president, Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, together with Dr. P. O. Bersell and Dr. C. W. Sorensen.⁸⁷ In making his announcement to the synodical convention regarding the Assembly at New Delhi, Dr. Lundeen declared,

It is hoped that there will be general participation in the Assembly emphasis by our pastors and people as use is made in our congregations of the prepared study booklet, "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World," a copy of which has been sent to each of our pastors.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ *The Third World Conference on Faith and Order*, Lund, Sweden, August 15-21, 1952, ed. O. S. Tomkins, London, 1953, Appendix 2, p. 331.

⁸⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1954, p. 104. See also *The Evanston Report*. The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Evanston, Illinois, August 15-31, 1954, New York, 1955, ed. W. A. Visser't Hooft, list of those present, p. 274.

⁸⁶ *Lutheran Companion*, August 11, 18, September 1, 8, 15, 22, 1954. *Augustana*, August 23, September 20, October 4, 1954.

⁸⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1961, p. 518.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 519.

At the conclusion of the New Delhi Assembly, when the *Lutheran Companion* published the "Message from the World Council of Churches," Dr. Lundeen appended a special appeal thereto, urging every Augustana member "to read this message thoughtfully." He then went on to say,

May I ask also—that each pastor take time in the worship service next following publication of this message—to read the message to his congregation. There is much food for thought here⁸⁹

The spirit of Christian community to which both the Augustana Lutheran Church and the World Council of Churches were committed was well expressed in one paragraph of the *New Delhi Message*:

We must together seek the fulness of Christian unity. We need for this purpose every member of the Christian family, of Eastern and Western tradition, ancient Churches and younger Churches, men and women, young and old, of every race and nation. Our brethren in Christ are given to us, not chosen by us. In some things our convictions do not permit us to act together, but we have made progress here in giving content to the unity we seek. Let us everywhere find out the things which we can do together; and faithfully do them praying and working always for that fuller unity which Christ wills for His Church.⁹⁰

The Community of the National Council of Churches

Wednesday, June 7, 1950, was a notable day in the annals of the Augustana Church. The ninety-first annual convention of the Synod was meeting in the Augustana Church, Washington, D. C. At the afternoon session the Honorable Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, appeared before the delegation and brought a personal word of greeting and encouragement to the people of the Augustana Church. This was the first and only time in the history of Augustana that the Chief Executive of the nation would attend a convention of the Augustana Lutheran Church. The fact that the President was there, gave evidence of a mutual sense of community between the Augustana Church and its American environment.⁹¹ The day of the President's visit witnessed another historic moment in Augustana's community relationships, as the Synod voted to accept membership in the *National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of*

⁸⁹ *Lutheran Companion*, December 27, 1961.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁹¹ The text of Mr. Truman's message to the Synod is given in the *Lutheran Companion*, June 28, 1950, p. 2f.

America. As the editor of the *Lutheran Companion* pointed out in his report of this history-making decision, "Acceptance of membership in the *National Council of Churches* was a definite break with American Lutheran tradition. *It was the first time since Lutheranism came to America more than 300 years ago that a Lutheran body had voted to become a full member of a national inter-church organization*" (Italics added).⁹²

Affiliation with the National Council of Churches on the part of Augustana was not a precipitous action. The Synod had given very careful consideration to the matter of interdenominational relationships. In his annual report to the Synod in 1945, Dr. Bersell declared,

We are associated with a number of interdenominational agencies in the field of foreign missions, home missions, parish and higher education, stewardship, eleemosynary institutions, etc. I believe that the time has come for our Synod to take under serious consideration the question of its relationship to the Federal Council. The voice of Lutheranism must be heard in the general councils of evangelical Christians in this land and throughout the world. This voice will be welcomed and it will be heard.⁹³

In response to Dr. Bersell's call for the establishment of broader American community ties, the Synod resolved that,

We believe the time has come when the voice of Lutheranism should be heard in the councils of the evangelical church in this land. We, therefore, memorialize the National Lutheran Council to take steps to establish a consultative relationship with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, and express ourselves as a Synod ready to enter into such a relationship.⁹⁴

Since plans were under way to revise the structure of the Federal Council of Churches, and since there was some disagreement in the National Lutheran Council regarding the advisability of joining the Federal Council, action on the part of the Augustana Synod was deferred. In the meantime, however, a special committee, consisting of Dr. P. O. Bersell, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, and Dr. O. O. Gustafson, was elected to make a study regarding the various aspects of relating the Synod to the projected *National Council of Churches*. This committee reported to the Synod on Wednesday, June 7, 1950, the day of

⁹² E. E. Ryden in *Lutheran Companion*, June 28, 1950, p. 4.

⁹³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1945, p. 15. The specific interdenominational agencies with which Augustana was associated were: the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the Home Missions Council of North America, the International Council of Religious Education, and the United Stewardship Council.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

President Truman's visit to the convention, and recommended that, on the basis of the proposed constitution of the *National Council*, the Augustana Church should accept membership in the new body which was being planned. To this recommendation the Synod responded by adopting the following:

Resolved that:

Assenting to the Preamble of the projected National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America, and desirous of continuing relationships which our church has already enjoyed in agencies now merging in the new Council, the Augustana Lutheran Church join this Council on the understanding that the constitution and amendments in substance be adopted as recommended by the Planning Committee to the constituting convention in November, 1950.⁹⁵

The constituting convention of the *National Council of Churches* was held in Cleveland, Ohio, November 28-December 2, 1950. As the Preamble of the constitution of the Council affirms, the new body seeks to express a new Christian unity in America, a new and broader sense of interdenominational community in this nation, by combining, co-ordinating and expanding, for the benefit of its constituents, and so of all people, the aims and functions of the following existing agencies: The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the Foreign Mission Conference of North America, the Home Mission Council of North America, the International Council of Religious Education, the Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, the National Protestant Council on Higher Education, the United Council of Church Women, and the United Stewardship Council. In addition, the following agencies also merged their activities with the Council, Church World Service, Interseminary Movement, Protestant Film Commission, and the Protestant Radio Commission.⁹⁶

The Augustana Church was represented at the Cleveland convention by ten delegates, and an equal number of alternates.⁹⁷ The service of worship which opened the convention, and which was held in

⁹⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1950, pp. 359-369.

⁹⁶ *Christian Faith In Action, Commemorative Volume, The Founding of the National Council of Christ in the United States of America*, Cleveland, Ohio, November 25-December 2, 1950, New York, 1951, ed. R. W. Barstow and Committee, Constitution of N.C.C.C.U.S.A., p. 265, and p. 43f.

⁹⁷ The delegates were: P. O. Bersell, Conrad Bergendoff, Mrs. John S. Benson, Rudolph Burke, S. E. Engstrom, Emory Lindquist, Richard B. Pearson, S. H. Swanson, Emil Swenson, Lael H. Westberg. The alternates were: Victor E. Beck, C. O. Bengtson, Oscar A. Benson, Mrs. Leslie A. Carlson, Martin E. Carlson, Mrs. Walter Ekelund, Eskil G. Englund, R. L. Fredstrom, T. A. Gustafson, and George Hall, *Ibid.*, p. 160f.

the Cleveland Public Auditorium, was conducted by Dr. P. O. Bersell, with Dr. Ralph W. Sockman of New York, preaching the sermon.⁹⁸ At the first business session, on the morning of November 29, 1950, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, presiding officer of the convention, called upon the respective delegations to arise and signify their authorization for their representatives to sign the official documents constituting the Council. The vote of the Augustana delegation was unanimously in the affirmative.⁹⁹ And then, one by one, twenty-nine church officials, presidents, bishops, and superintendents affixed their signatures to the constituting documents as the names of their denominations were called. When Dr. P. O. Bersell, as president of the Augustana Church, placed his signature on the documents at Cleveland, he thereby associated the Augustana Church with the greatest interdenominational community of American Christians in the history of the Republic. The Council, as then constituted, comprised twenty-five Protestant and four Eastern Orthodox communions, representing approximately 31,000,000 souls. Its work reaches into virtually every American community and touches most of the countries of the earth.¹⁰⁰

The Bible School Movement as Expressive of Lutheran Community

One of the most unique, though perhaps less spectacular, expressions of a growing sense of community in the Augustana Church was connected with the emergence of the *Bible School Movement*.

The institution known in America as the *Bible school* has its prototype in Europe. The great evangelical revivals which swept through the British Isles, Scandinavia, and the Continent during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries emphasized both the need and the responsibility of dedicated laymen to help spread the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. To prepare lay people for such service in the church, "lay schools" or "Mission schools" were established which offered brief but concentrated courses in Bible study and practical methods of colportage. In the Scandinavian lands, particularly in Sweden and Norway, a number of such "Mission schools" were founded which rendered significant service to the home and foreign missionary programs of the national church.¹⁰¹ When the Bible School was transplanted

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 217f.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 219, 238.

¹⁰⁰ For an excellent account of the Cleveland convention see article by Philip A. Johnson, "National Council Is Born," *Lutheran Companion*, December 13, 1950.

¹⁰¹ The Fjellstedt School in Uppsala, the Ahlberg School in Ahlsborg, and the

to America as a consequence of the revival movements in this country, it represented a theory of education which contrasted with that of the American liberal arts program. The characteristic difference between a Bible institute or school and a liberal arts college is essentially a difference in educational philosophy. The Bible school traditionally tends to conceive of education in terms of vocational training and dogmatic indoctrination. The liberal arts college thinks of education as a process of growth in the capacity for well-informed critical thought achieved through the disciplines of the liberal arts.

In the years before World War I, a number of non-Lutheran Bible schools had been founded in America, some claiming to offer a full theological course of training for ministers, but most of them appealing chiefly to lay workers in the church. Among the best known of such institutions were the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, Illinois, the Nyack Bible Institute, Nyack, New York, the Biblical Seminary, founded by W. W. White, New York City, and the Biblical Institute of Los Angeles, in California.¹⁰² During and after the war years, many earnest, spiritually-minded Lutheran young men and women, seeking personal religious clarification as well as some practical training for possible service in the church, were enrolling in these non-Lutheran institutions.¹⁰³

The idea of providing Lutheran Bible schools for Lutheran Bible students seems to have arisen in the minds of a number of people about the same time. The earliest attempt, however, to implement such a notion in the Augustana Church was made in Chicago where a group of pastors in the southern Chicago district began planning for a Bible school in January, 1918. These plans materialized in September, 1918, when *The Lutheran Bible Institute of the Southern Chicago District* conducted its first class in the chapel of the Augustana Home for the Aged, 74th and Stony Island Avenue. Classes met on the second and

Mission Institute in Stavanger were outstanding examples of this type of institution. It was this kind of school the Norwegian professor, August Weenaas, wished to make of Augustana Seminary when he joined the Augustana faculty in Paxton, 1868.

¹⁰² Terrelle B. Crum, "Bible Institutes and Colleges," *Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1955, p. 131. Jay R. Calhoun, "By These Paths: Avenues of Pre-Theological Study," *Encounter*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Spring, 1957, pp. 174-181.

¹⁰³ Article by Annette Elmquist, (Mrs. George N. Anderson), *Augustana*, January 30, 1919. Miss Elmquist had spent a year in such a non-Lutheran Bible School. In a letter, dated April 4, 1962, Dr. Samuel M. Miller stated, "Reformed Bible schools were attracting Lutheran young people who wanted to specialize in Bible Study; there was no Lutheran school for them to go to. Religious courses in Lutheran colleges did not answer the needs."

fourth Monday evenings of each month from September through the following May, with neighboring pastors lecturing on various books of the Bible. These Bible courses were "practical expositions designed for busy laymen and not for learned theologians." The superficial nature of the instruction which was often given is indicated by the fact that some of the lecture series were said to cover an entire book of the Bible in three hours.¹⁰⁴ This type of Bible study apparently did not adequately meet the demands of the day, for within a couple of years the enterprise was abandoned.

While the Chicago venture was getting under way, a similar, but much more ambitious, program was being planned in Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Minnesota. A number of Augustana pastors and lay people became interested in the establishment of a Bible school which would serve the Lutherans, young and old, in the Twin City area.¹⁰⁵ The leaders of the movement included Miss Annette Elmquist of St. Paul, her future husband, George N. Anderson, pastor of First Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Roy F. Thelander, pastor of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Samuel M. Miller, pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, and Claus A. Wendell, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Minneapolis. A public meeting was held in the late summer of 1918, at which the *Lutheran Bible Institute Association* was formed for the purpose of owning and controlling a *Lutheran Bible Institute*.¹⁰⁶

The *Association* represented very nearly a cross section of Lutheranism in the Twin Cities, which was precisely what the planning committee had intended. Although the initiative for the Bible School project had been taken by a group of Augustana people, it was intended from the very beginning that the school must be an inter-Lutheran enterprise. It was to be a "free-standing institution," independent of the control of any one church body, belonging to all Lutherans alike, and serving all Lutheran churches equally. The original plan envisaged a venture which would express the spirit of Lutheran community and mutuality at the deepest levels of Biblical faith and action. Therefore, every effort was made to involve as comprehensive a section of

¹⁰⁴ For a description of this venture see article by C. Emil Bergquist, *Lutheran Companion*, March 15, 1919.

¹⁰⁵ *Lutheran Companion*, January 18; February 1, 22; May 17, July 26, August 16, 1919.

¹⁰⁶ The official organ of L. B. I. is *The Bible Banner*, which carried historical accounts of the origins of the institution in the issues of January, 1920, and September, 1924. Numerous references to L. B. I. appear in *The Lutheran Companion* for 1919.

Lutheranism in the venture as possible. The representative make-up of the Association was the first decisive step in this direction.¹⁰⁷

The Association elected a board of directors, and the board called Dr. Samuel M. Miller to be the first Dean of the Institute, and appointed the first faculty.¹⁰⁸ The board, administration, and faculty devised an academic program and arranged for various courses of study. The academic program was divided into several departments: the day school, operating five days a week for thirty weeks each year, requiring full time student residence; evening school, conducted at the Institute and in outlying centers, on certain evenings each week for specified periods; summer school, usually held at a summer camp for five weeks; Bible conferences, held in congregations throughout the country; correspondence courses offered in selected areas of Bible study, and the publication of devotional literature.¹⁰⁹

The *Lutheran Bible Institute* in Minneapolis began to function on September 16, 1919. For the first year the work was carried on in the basement quarters of the First Lutheran Church, St. Paul, with an enrollment of twenty-nine students. After the first year the institution conducted its program in a building rented from Luther Theological Seminary. It continued in this location until it moved into its own building, almost ten years later.¹¹⁰ As the new Institute began to take shape, the board of directors, the faculty, as well as the student body, like the Association itself, represented a cross section of Lutheranism in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area. Friends of the Institute, who supported the school with their prayers and their means likewise represented virtually all Lutheran bodies of the section. Thus, the Lutheran Bible Institute, from the very outset, was a unique embodiment of community. This characteristic continued to prevail also in the branches which were established by the parent school in Los Angeles,¹¹¹ Seattle,¹¹² and Teaneck, New Jersey.¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Dr. Samuel M. Miller, April 21, 1962. Dr. Miller emphasizes the inter-Lutheran character of the Bible Institute as constituting a basic characteristic. From the beginning, he declares, L. B. I. has sought to be representative of conservative Lutheranism in America, deriving its support from, making its appeal to, and seeking to serve virtually all sections of the Lutheran Church in America. The broad representation of midwestern Lutheranism in the personnel of L. B. I. is given in an article, "The Present Personnel of the Lutheran Bible Institute," *The Bible Banner*, January, 1924.

¹⁰⁸ Dr. Samuel Miller served as Dean of L. B. I. from 1919 to 1931, and again from 1935 to 1945.

¹⁰⁹ *The Bible Banner*, September, 1924.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, January, 1920; September, 1924.

¹¹¹ The California Lutheran Bible School.

¹¹² The Lutheran Bible Institute of Seattle.

¹¹³ Lutheran Bible Institute of Teaneck, N. J.

The Bible school movement has significance in the history of the Augustana Church, however, for more reasons than that it has represented a co-operative endeavor with other Lutherans as an evidence of the spirit of Lutheran community. The Lutheran Bible Institute has stimulated the reading and the study of Scripture and has thus caused the lives of many people to be enriched by new religious insight, greater spiritual maturity, and deeper Christian commitment.¹¹⁴ Through its ministry, the Lutheran Bible Institute has also awakened in many men and women a desire to enlist in full-time religious service. Many pastors in the Augustana ministerium can testify that their first serious thoughts regarding the ministry were awakened through contact with the Lutheran Bible Institute. Many missionaries and evangelists, both men and women, on the foreign mission fields can do likewise. Parish workers and deaconesses, too, have been inspired to devote their entire lives to the service of the church through the ministry of the Institute. Thus the Bible school has played an important role as a recruitment agency for full-time church workers. Furthermore, the Lutheran Bible Institute has recruited and trained significant numbers of lay people and sent them out as colporteurs and teachers into areas of the United States and Canada where there are neither Sunday Schools nor churches. Thus, the Institute has fulfilled an important function as an evangelizing agency in the church.

The Bible school has also assumed a somewhat controversial role as the critic of the church. This critical function has derived from the image which the Bible Institute seems to have had of itself. It has looked upon itself as an *interior resource of renewal*. That is to say, the Bible school has conceived of its place and function as being *within* the church, and not as an entity operating outside of or tangent to the church. Like the Rosenian movement in the Church of Sweden, The Bible Institute has insisted that it exists for the renewal of the spiritual life of the church, but that such renewal must occur within the structured life and activity of the existing ecclesiastical community, and not through separatistic withdrawal and isolation.¹¹⁵ Dedicated to the simple task of teaching the Bible, so that its message might be made more widely known and deeply understood, and insisting that the faith

¹¹⁴ The columns of *The Bible Banner* carry frequent communications from individuals who express gratitude for the deepening of their own spiritual life through the renewal of interest in Scripture inspired by the ministry of L. B. I. See for example *Bible Banner*, May, 1920, p. 4; November, 1922, p. 5; October, 1926, p. 14f. *Lutheran Companion*, February 22, 1919.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Dr. S. M. Miller, April 21, 1962. See article by S. M. Miller, "Are We Lutheran?", *Bible Banner*, July, 1921. Article by Annette Elmquist, "The Lutheran Bible Institute," *Augustana*, January 30, 1919.

and practice of the church, including both clergy and laity, must conform to this message, it was perhaps inevitable that the Bible school would sooner or later emerge as the church's critic. Indeed, the insistence of the founders of the Lutheran Bible Institute upon maintaining a "free-standing institution" was perhaps partially motivated by the desire for sufficient freedom to enable the school to observe and comment without fear of ecclesiastical muzzling.

The prerogative of a critic of the faith and practice of the church has been expressed by the Lutheran Bible Institute, generally speaking, from the premises of a fundamentalistic Lutheran orthodoxy. This is not to say that every pronouncement or every individual associated with the Lutheran Bible Institute can be thus classified. What must be said, however, is that the general stance taken by the leadership of the Institute and enunciated in the columns of the official organ of the school, *The Bible Banner*, has usually been that of fundamentalistic Lutheran orthodoxy.

This prevailing temper is exhibited at a number of points. The conception of the Bible which *The Bible Banner* enunciates may be said to be fundamentalistic in the sense that, although the journal appears to be cautious in stating its position, it quotes with approval those who contend for the theory of verbal inspiration.¹¹⁶ The schools of higher and lower Biblical criticism are usually treated with scant sympathy. For example, Dr. O. N. Olson, for a number of years the president of the Iowa Conference, and a teacher in the theological seminary from 1928 to 1931, wrote a Bible Study Quarterly in 1926, in which he referred approvingly to the theory of a dual authorship of the prophecy of Isaiah. The editor of *The Bible Banner* published a series of articles which reproached Dr. Olson for his liberal views and called upon the Church to protect its youth from "modernist interpretations" of Scripture.¹¹⁷ This fundamentalistic approach to Scripture also impelled *The Bible Banner* to voice its opposition to the theory of evolution, since this idea was said to contradict the Biblical account of creation. Indeed, evolution and communism were associated as twin evils against which Christians must be on guard.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ See articles, "The Book That God Wrote," *The Bible Banner*, June, 1925, and "Is the Bible Uninspired," *The Bible Banner*, June, 1925.

¹¹⁷ *The Bible Banner*, February, March, 1926; September, 1927. Dr. Adolf Hult, professor at Augustana Seminary, made an intemperate attack upon Olson protesting the "crashings and clashing" of the "dunderheadedness and self-complacency" of liberal theologians. Dean Miller was more gracious but no less opposed to Biblical criticism which seemed to "undermine the authority of Scripture."

¹¹⁸ *The Bible Banner*, May, 1923; January, 1926.

Ecumenism was another peril against which the Bible Institute warned its students and friends. When the first World Conference on Life and Work was to meet in Stockholm, 1925, *The Bible Banner* launched an attack upon Archbishop Söderblom and the World Conference which reflects very little understanding of the modern ecumenical movement. The leader of the assault was Dr. Adolf Hult, who declared,

Hallesby, Söderblom's mightiest opponent in the Scandinavian lands, said during his visit that he deemed Söderblom the most dangerous man in the Lutheran Church. I told Hallesby personally that such was since years my own conviction . . . the press of our Synod stands alone in praise of Söderblom . . . shall our Synod be the door to rationalism in the American Lutheran Church. . . . God awaken us in time!¹¹⁹

On the same subject the editor of *The Bible Banner* declared,

When we were invited to attend a reception for the archbishop and say something about the Lutheran Bible School, we could not for conscience' sake do so. Even though it could be explained that we would not thereby have been approving his message, yet we do desire that our position be perfectly clear . . . all the liberals plead for love and co-operation, but God's Word says in 2 John 10, "If any one cometh to you and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting; for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in the evil work."¹²⁰

According to the spokesmen for the Lutheran Bible Institute, Archbishop Söderblom was unacceptable because he was theologically "liberal," and the Stockholm Conference was a mistake because "such conferences call forth only confusion and draw off thousands of workers from the fields of the Spirit into bypaths."¹²¹ Any attempt to Christianize the social order of the world by promoting conferences for study and discussion was doomed to failure, for "true Christianizing can never be achieved by any shorter or easier road than that of personal conversion."¹²² On the subject of ecumenical Conferences Dr. Hult declared,

Theologians may have license to cut the Word to pieces and then orate beautifully about heart-unity and organization-unity, with themselves as grand lords of a great external establishment, maintained in pomp by the sweat of the poor and struggling com-

¹¹⁹ See Hult's article "Söderblom a Temptation to the Augustana Synod," *The Bible Banner*, January, 1924.

¹²⁰ *The Bible Banner*, "Visitors from Europe," November, 1923.

¹²¹ *The Bible Banner*, June, 1925.

¹²² *The Bible Banner*, September, 1925.

moners of our sordid human life . . . but if the present day ecclesiastics of organization-unity of the church had a true conception of the New Testament word, they would not write, speak, argue, labor as they do for a unionistic church which scraps the witness of "the whole counsel of God." . . . External division is no great worriment except for aspiring churchmen infected with Romanistic ideas of a massive establishment.¹²³

While the Lutheran Bible Institute undertook to chide the entire Augustana Synod for its participation in the ecumenical movement, and sought to discredit the archbishop of the Church of Sweden, it also kept a watchful eye, in the spirit of C. F. W. Walther,¹²⁴ on the conduct of individual churchmen, hailing those whom it deemed to be lax in doctrine or practice before its own judgment seat. Thus, in the issue of December, 1929, an article appeared in *The Bible Banner* under the caption, "Sad Example of Unionism."¹²⁵ The article called attention to an item clipped from a Boston newspaper which stated that the Reverend Dr. S. G. Hägglund, president of the New England Conference of the Augustana Church, had appeared on the platform and pronounced the benediction at a community Thanksgiving service in Boston, where the preacher had been a Jewish rabbi. Ten different denominations were said to have been represented at the service. *The Bible Banner* branded this act of participation by a Lutheran clergyman inexcusable "unionism," demanding that an immediate halt be called regarding such lax practices. In subsequent issues of *The Bible Banner*, Dr. Hägglund sought to defend his action, pointing out that to pronounce the benediction in the name of the Triune God was not a compromise of the Christian faith but is a testimony to it; the editor of *The Bible Banner*, however, dismissed the argument by calling it a "mixing of the worship of Belial and Christ."¹²⁶ Calling upon Dr. Hägglund to repent of his error and turn from his unorthodox ways, *The Bible Banner* declared,

It is a dangerous time in which we live, and we cannot but express our hope and our prayer that God will grant the leaders of our church the grace to fight manfully against the introduction of the leaven of the Saducees of liberalism into the life and practice of our church.¹²⁷

¹²³ Adolf Hult, "What Church Unity Did Christ Advocate?", *The Bible Banner*, November, 1925.

¹²⁴ Walther's viewpoint was often approved in the columns of *The Bible Banner*.

¹²⁵ *The Bible Banner*, December, 1929, p. 13.

¹²⁶ *The Bible Banner*, February, March, May, 1928.

¹²⁷ *The Bible Banner*, March, 1928.

A strain of fundamentalistic Puritanism is also evident in the social attitudes expressed in *The Bible Banner*. Moving pictures are viewed with suspicion, because they so often portray the sordidness of a "worldly life."¹²⁸ In an article entitled "Shocking," a Bible school faculty member uses *The Bible Banner* to call attention to the evil of short skirts and cosmetics, warning the young women of the church to guard against the corroding evils of a lax moral order.¹²⁹ In a long article, the ebullient Dr. Adolf Hult asked, "Do Christians Need the Card Table?" The author was certain they did not, and cited the success stories of Hasselquist, Olsson, C. A. Swensson and others to prove his point.¹³⁰

Because of its outspoken criticism of what it deemed unacceptable Lutheranism, the Bible Institute won for itself both friends and foes in the Augustana Church. There were those who felt that the spiritual health of the Church needed a voice which would constantly remind both clergy and lay people of the obligation to remain "faithful to the Word of God." There were others who were offended by what they called the school's "holier than thou" attitude, and who claimed to see a strain of Pelagianism in the teachings of the Institute.¹³¹ On the whole, however, cordial relationships have existed between the Lutheran Bible Institute and the Augustana Lutheran Church. This is evident in the large number of students which the Institute has recruited from the Augustana Church, and the percentage of faculty members who are Augustana men.

The New Service Book and Hymnal

The new *Service Book and Hymnal* which was introduced in the Augustana Church in 1957 and 1958, was at once both a consequence and a matrix of Lutheran community.

So far as the emergence of this common project is historically related to the Augustana Lutheran Church, it may be said to have its origin in the American Lutheran Conference. It was at the second biennial convention of the Conference, held in Des Moines, Iowa, November, 1934, that the question was raised of creating a common book

¹²⁸ *The Bible Banner*, March, 1927.

¹²⁹ *The Bible Banner*, July, 1927.

¹³⁰ *The Bible Banner*, August, 1927. Dr. Hult acknowledged that his writings were not always acceptable to the editors of the *Lutheran Companion* and *Augustana*: his viewpoint seems to have coincided, however, with that of L. B. I., and he was a frequent contributor to the pages of *The Bible Banner*.

¹³¹ Letter from Dr. Samuel M. Miller, April 4, 1962.

of worship for the Lutheran Church in America. As a consequence of the discussion over this question, the following resolution was adopted:

That a committee consisting of one member from each constituent body be appointed by the executive committee for the purpose of studying the feasibility of a common liturgy for the Lutheran Church in America and that said committee be authorized and directed to contact other Lutheran bodies with a view of obtaining their co-operation in this endeavor.¹³²

The Commission on a Common Liturgy of the American Lutheran Conference, which came into being by appointment the following year, did not consult with other Lutheran bodies outside the Conference, but did give serious study and consideration to the production not only of a common liturgy, but a common hymnal as well. From these studies there emerged a recommendation which was presented to the seventh biennial convention of the American Lutheran Conference, as follows:

The commission believes that plans should be laid and set in motion as soon as possible looking toward a joint Lutheran Hymnal and Liturgy. The work of revision now carried on in the various synods should not be a hindrance but rather an aid to the eventual publication of such a Hymnal and Liturgy.¹³³

This resolution called attention to the strategic importance of taking decisive action in this matter, since a number of Lutheran bodies were at that time busy revising their own books of worship. The Augustana Synod had appointed a *Committee on the Revision of the Hymnal* as early as 1936, and that Committee had been at work for several years.¹³⁴ The United Lutheran Church had been at work revising its Common Service Book since 1938, and in 1942 the American Lutheran Church had appointed a committee to "make a study of the hymnal looking toward possible revision."¹³⁵ As these separate committees on revision busied themselves with their tasks, there was talk among all of them about the advisability of broadening the undertaking to include the creation of a truly common book of worship for Lutherans in America. The idea seems to have taken root in a number of Lutheran groups at about the same time. The year 1944 found

¹³² *Minutes of the Second Biennial Convention of the American Lutheran Conference*, Des Moines, Iowa, November 14-16, 1934, p. 19.

¹³³ *Minutes of the Seventh Biennial Convention of the American Lutheran Conference*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, November 15-17, 1944, p. 50.

¹³⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1936, p. 187.

¹³⁵ E. E. Ryden, "The Common Hymnal," *The Lutheran Quarterly*, August, 1950, p. 270f.

three different Lutheran bodies making independent decisions, all pointing in the same direction. At its St. Paul Convention, June 7-11, 1944, the Augustana Church received the report of the Commission on Liturgical Theory and Practice regarding proposed changes in the Orders for Baptism and Confirmation, and then resolved:

That in view of the eventual union of the Lutheran Bodies of America, we urge our Commission to work with similar commissions of other Lutheran Church Bodies so that a common service may be evolved containing contributions from the liturgies of the various Bodies.¹³⁶

In October of the same year, the board of directors of the Augustana Book Concern requested Dr. P. O. Bersell, president of the Augustana Church, and at that time also president of the National Lutheran Council, to use his good offices

To inaugurate and prosecute action for the acceptance, development, and publication of a common church hymnal by the various Lutheran bodies as an agent in making more efficient the stewardship of church funds and the cultivation of closer unity among Lutherans.¹³⁷

While Augustana was taking this action, the American Lutheran Church, meeting for its biennial convention in Sandusky, Ohio, October, 1944, commended its Hymnal Revision Committee "for approaching other bodies on the matter of hymnal study and revision."¹³⁸ Simultaneously, but entirely independent of the actions by other Lutheran groups, the United Lutheran Church, meeting for its fourteenth convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, expressed similar sentiments as it authorized its Common Service Book Committee to continue working on a revision, "and in so doing, to seek the fullest possible co-operation with other Lutheran bodies in the hope of producing as nearly as possible, a common Lutheran hymnal in America."¹³⁹

It was the Common Service Book Committee of the United Lutheran Church which took the initiative and set in motion the project which would realize the dream which seemed to be in the minds of so many Lutherans. The Common Service Book Committee, through its chairman, Dr. Luther Reed, issued an invitation for an exploratory conference to be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, June 19-21, 1945.

¹³⁶ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1944, p. 284.

¹³⁷ Ryden, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

¹³⁸ *Minutes of the Eighth Convention of the American Lutheran Church*, Sandusky, Ohio, October 9-14, 1944, p. 277.

¹³⁹ *Minutes of the Fourteenth Biennial Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 11-17, 1944, p. 436.

Twelve men, representing the Augustana Church, the American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Lutheran Church, responded to this invitation.¹⁴⁰ This meeting proved to be of historic significance, for it marked the beginning of a new and important step in the history of Lutheran unity and co-operation. During the deliberations in Pittsburgh it was discovered that there already existed broad areas of common liturgical and hymnological usage. A surprisingly large number of hymns were common property in all the traditions represented around the conference table. Optimism and enthusiasm gripped the men who attended the Pittsburgh sessions. Accordingly, two more meetings were held in Pittsburgh within a few months, with remarkable unanimity of spirit and much progress reported. At the third of these Pittsburgh conferences, held at Hotel Henry, October 26, 1945, Dr. E. E. Ryden, representing the Augustana Church, called attention to the resolution which the Augustana Synod had adopted in St. Paul, in 1944, to the effect that efforts should be made to provide *both a common hymnal and a common liturgy* for the Lutheran Church in America. This proposal evoked a spirited discussion, pro and con. The representatives from the United Lutheran Church were fearful lest endeavors to achieve a common liturgy would hinder the present efforts to create a common hymnal, and would perhaps create confusion among those who were now using the Common Service. The majority felt, however, that to have both a common hymnal and a common liturgy was such a highly desirable goal that some risk was justifiable. Hence, the conference adopted the following resolution:

In response to the suggestion of the Augustana Synod urging a study of the question of a Common Lutheran Liturgy, and in view of a resolution adopted by the United Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church evidencing a desire for closer co-operation between the various groups in hymnological studies and other related subjects, the Conferences on a Common Lutheran Hymnal recommends that the presidents of the various Lutheran bodies be asked to appoint representatives on a joint commission similar to this one, who shall consider such liturgical matters as shall be presented to them in the hope of achieving common practice throughout the Church.¹⁴¹

In response to this resolution the presidents of the co-operating churches appointed representatives to confer together for the purpose

¹⁴⁰ The Augustana representatives were Dr. E. E. Ryden and Dr. C. A. Wendell.

¹⁴¹ Ryden, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

of exploring the possibilities of creating a common liturgy for the Lutheran Church in America. These representatives assembled in Chicago, February 25, 1946, and organized the *Joint Commission on a Common Liturgy*. Henceforth, there were two separate joint commissions, the one working on a common hymnal, the other on a common liturgy.¹⁴² Busy with their separate but closely related tasks, the two Joint Commissions continued their efforts, and were gratified to welcome representatives from the Lutheran Free Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Suomi Synod, so that after 1945, all of the constituent bodies of the National Lutheran Council were represented on both Joint Commissions. The work of the two commissions was co-ordinated through the office of the general chairman, Dr. Luther D. Reed, who presided over both commissions, guiding their work and keeping each group informed about the progress of the other, and from time to time calling both commissions to meet together. Similarly, the chairman of the music committee of both commissions, Dr. E. T. Horn, III, sought to co-ordinate this phase of activity.

By 1948 the work of both Joint Commissions had progressed far enough so that an extensive report could be made to the participating churches. The Joint Commission on the Liturgy reported to the Augustana Church through the *Augustana Commission on Liturgical Theory and Practice*, while the Joint Commission on the Hymnal reported through the *Augustana Committee on Revision of the Hymnal*. At its convention in 1948, the Augustana Church approved the reports of the Joint Commission and authorized continuation of the projects.¹⁴³

The Joint Commissions continued their efforts toward the creation of a hymnal which would be "a new work, not simply a conflation of existing hymnals," and a liturgy which would be, not merely a hodgepodge compilation of various liturgical items borrowed from participating traditions, but a true and unified synthesis of the rich life of worship represented by the Lutheran Church in America. There was both agreement and disagreement, forbearance and impatience, but above all, there was progress. The members of the Joint Commissions learned from each other, even as they witnessed to one another. Finally, by 1957, the main work was done. A hymnal containing six hundred and two hymns, and representing, perhaps, the finest collection of Christian hymnody ever to be produced by the Lutheran

¹⁴² Cf. L. D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy*, Muhlenberg Press, 1947, pp. 205ff.

¹⁴³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1948, pp. 340, 392f.

Church in America, was being put through the press. A liturgy which was rooted in the "developed worship of the ancient and medieval Christian Church, both East and West, and grounded on the historic German, Scandinavian, and American uses of the post-Reformation centuries" and furnished with three musical settings, was completed. The new *Service Book and Hymnal of the Lutheran Church in America* was ready for introduction into the congregations of the eight participating bodies.¹⁴⁴

In preparation for the introduction of the new book, a *Lutheran Worship Seminar* was held, November 6-7, 1957, in the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Chicago, one of the historic congregations of the Augustana Lutheran Church. Some two hundred and fifty Lutheran pastors, organists, and choir directors from all parts of the United States and Canada, representing all eight bodies of the National Lutheran Council, were in attendance. They had come to learn from the members of the Joint Commission the story of the new Service Book and Hymnal, to discover the richness of its contents, to hear the liturgy properly rendered, and to lay plans for the introduction of the new book of worship into every section of the Church. At the concluding session of the Seminar, the general chairman, Dr. Reed, addressed the assembly. He reminded his audience that the seminar in Chicago, with its broad Lutheran representation, as well as the new Service Book and Hymnal, were outstanding expressions of Lutheran community. He said, in part:

This meeting marks the culmination of years of intensive effort. As we have worked together, we have in reality been the Church, for we have been broadly representative of eight different groups from all parts of America. . . . I have been greatly impressed by the vast potential of the assembly. A conference like this is a great achievement.¹⁴⁵

The new *Service Book and Hymnal* did not suit the taste of everyone in the Augustana Church as it was introduced into congregational use, as attested by critical letters to the editor of the *Lutheran Com-*

¹⁴⁴ For the descriptive quotations given above see Preface and Introduction, *Service Book and Hymnal of the Lutheran Church in America*, p. Vlf., and pp. 285-287.

¹⁴⁵ Editorial, *The Lutheran Companion*, December 4, 1957. Articles explaining and interpreting the new liturgy and hymnal are in the *Lutheran Companion*, November 6, December 18, 1957, January 15, March 19, 26, April 16, 23, 30, May 28, June 18, July 2, August 27, November 5, 1958. *The Lutheran Quarterly*, August, November, 1950; May, November, 1952; February, May, 1953.

panion,¹⁴⁶ expressing dissatisfaction about some feature of the new book. Nevertheless, in general, the new *Service Book and Hymnal* was received with appreciation by most of the pastors and congregations of the Augustana Lutheran Church. At a meeting of the Augustana Commission on Worship, November, 1961, it was reported that approximately ninety per cent of the congregations of the Augustana Church were using the new book.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ See for example the *Lutheran Companion*, September 3, 1958, May 27, July 22, September 23, October 14, 1959.

¹⁴⁷ *Minutes of the Augustana Commission on Worship*, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 16-17, 1961. Members representing the Augustana Lutheran Church who have served on the Joint Commission of the Hymnal are: Dr. E. E. Ryden, Dr. C. J. Sodergren, Dr. C. A. Wendell, Mrs. Paul Esping, Prof. Brynolf Lundholm, Dr. E. W. Olson, and Dr. Clifford A. Nelson. Augustana members on the Joint Commission of the Liturgy have been: Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Dr. O. N. Olson, Dr. Otto Bostrom, and Dr. G. Everett Arden.

The New Approach

National Boom and Bust

THE HIGH FLYING PROSPERITY in the United States which followed World War I came to a grinding halt with the stock market crash of October 29, 1929. Panic gripped the whole country as banks closed, railroads went into receivership, giant industrial concerns declared bankruptcy, farmers and homeowners were dispossessed, and an estimated 12,000,000 men and women were thrown out of work. Ruin and actual hunger haunted not only the tenant and the share cropper, but virtually every section of the land, and every segment of society.¹

President Herbert Hoover called upon Congress to make provision for large-scale construction of public works to put capital and labor into action again; he established the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which placed federal credit at the disposal of banks, insurance companies, and other business concerns, and he formed the Federal Home Loan Bank Board to aid people facing mortgage foreclosure. When the time came for the presidential election of 1932, Herbert Hoover and his Republican party were deeply engaged in wrestling with the depression, and popular criticism of Hoover was not to the effect that he was doing nothing, but that he was not doing enough to get the wheels of the American economy moving once more.

The Democratic party in American politics has been historically committed to the Jeffersonian principle that "the less government the better," and Democratic leaders in 1932 gave no indication that they intended to change this policy. Nevertheless, the American electorate, either in desperation or in the conviction that the Democrats would do more than Hoover and the Republicans, swept the Democratic candidate, Franklin Delano Roosevelt into the White House with a plurality of 22,800,000 votes for Roosevelt as against 15,700,000 votes for

¹ S. E. Morrison and H. S. Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic*, New York, 1942, 2 vols., II, Chapter XXII, pp. 515-548.

Hoover; and with Roosevelt's victory the Democratic party also won a majority in Congress.²

The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt to the presidency of the United States marks an important turning point in the history of political thought in America. Up to this time political liberalism in America had been committed to the principle of a minimum of governmental interference in the exercise of free enterprise. In the panic of 1929-1932 a revolution occurred in the basic American attitude toward government. "Liberalism" was now associated with the demand for more governmental interference in the national economy. Federal regulation of free enterprise now became the battle cry of the liberals. President Roosevelt interpreted his own election and the unprecedented Democratic majorities in Congress as a mandate from the people to "interfere" with the national economy wherever it was thought necessary to relieve human distress. Accordingly, Mr. Roosevelt inaugurated his "liberal" policies which he called "The New Deal for America." The components of the New Deal were (1) Federal control over banking and currency; (2) Federal credit to property owners and business firms in financial difficulty; (3) Federal relief to farmers; (4) Federal regulation and stimulation of business enterprises; (5) the establishment of new regulations, involving Federal supervision of collective bargaining for organized labor, and (6) Federal guarantee of social security for restricted groups of people against the hazards of dependency, unemployment, poverty, and old age.³

With the inauguration of the New Deal, political thought in America parted company with the nineteenth-century conception of a *laissez faire* state. Roosevelt had launched the United States upon a vast experiment of *state capitalism*, in which the Federal Government was no longer a passive co-ordinating agency. It was now to be an aggressive, initiating power, ready and eager to assume increasingly larger areas of responsibility for the public welfare. That this new conception of the role and function of government met an affirmative response on the part of the American public is attested by the fact that Roosevelt was returned to the White House in 1936, 1940 and 1944, and the Republican party adopted into its own program, one by one, many of the measures of the New Deal.

² Charles and Mary Beard, *A Basic History of the United States*, Philadelphia, 1944, p. 455.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 456. See also Louis M. Hacker, *The Shaping of the American Tradition*, New York, 1947, 2 vols., II, part 10, pp. 1125-1240.

The New Approach in Augustana

In the era which followed World War I, there were a number of striking similarities between developments within the Augustana Synod and the nation at large. In the period from 1915 to 1925, for example, the Augustana Church shared fully in the unprecedented prosperity of the land. During these years the confirmed membership increased by 18.3 per cent, property investments grew by 83.3 per cent, and total contributions advanced by 140.7 per cent as the per capita giving per year increased from \$11.99 to \$24.43.⁴

During this period, too, the Augustana Church was operating under a *laissez faire* synodical program which had been initiated during the nineteenth century and had undergone but slight basic revision since 1870. The synodical structure established in 1870 had affirmed the idea that "the less centralized government the better," even though Hasselquist had fought for greater centralized authority. Since 1870 the essential responsibility for carrying on home missions, social missions, evangelization, and other basic church work was vested in the several conferences, and by them turned over to the local congregation. From 1870 to the Great Depression the principle of decentralization seemed to be working successfully enough. Indeed, the Synod was so decentralized that there was actually no synodical headquarters, except in the home of the presidential incumbent. During the regime of G. A. Brandelle, the office of president was centered in the pigeon holes of Dr. Brandelle's old-fashioned upright office desk in one corner of his living room in Rock Island, and carried on without benefit of full-time secretarial help. It was a method of administration which looked back to the quaint days of the horse and buggy, and some of the Synod's old-timers saw no good reason for changing it.⁵

Then there was the devastating effect of the Great Depression. While the nation as a whole wallowed in the slough of fear and uncertainty, the Augustana Church also felt the adverse effects of the depression and its psychology of apprehension. Between 1930 and 1935 the Augustana Church suffered a drastic cut in all phases of its financial support, as per capita giving in the Synod sank from an average of \$22.13 in 1930 to an average of \$13.82 in 1935. As a result curtailment in all phases of its activities, at home and abroad, was the

⁴Confirmed membership increased from 187,834 to 222,153; property holdings increased from \$12,073,053 to \$22,140,192; total contributions rose from \$2,207,704 to \$5,315,305. Augustana Synod Statistics, Every Five Years, 1860-1940, Every Year Since 1940, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1961, p. 770.

⁵Letter from P. O. Bersell, February 26, 1962.

order of the day throughout the Augustana Church during these lean years.⁶ The confidence of former years which impelled the Church to make bold plans and take vigorous action to realize such plans was now replaced by a spirit of timidity, fear and, uncertainty. Instead of bold action there was prudential caution. The momentum of the past busy, prosperous years slowed, until it seemed that the Synod was resting on dead center.⁷

And to compound the difficulty, the leadership of the Synod had grown old and tired. Dr. G. A. Brandelle was sixty-eight years old when the depression struck the country in 1929. He had been a member of the Augustana ministerium for forty-five years, and had occupied the president's chair since the death of Dr. L. A. Johnston in 1918. Over the many years he had served his Church with unremitting toil, traveling more than any of his predecessors in office, both at home and abroad. Though he was still a rather vigorous man for his years, he no longer possessed either the physical stamina or the mental resourcefulness to deal adequately with the numerous new problems which now confronted the Augustana Synod. Those who were critical of the "grand old man of Augustana" were not saying that he was doing nothing to relieve the distress of the Church, but that he was not doing enough, or even the right things on a scale commensurate with the Church's problems.⁸

It was under such circumstances that the Augustana Synod met in Rock Island, Illinois, June 5-10, 1935, to celebrate its Diamond Jubilee. Two of its most prominent sons, Gustaf Albert Brandelle, president of the Synod, and Gustav Albert Andreen, president of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, had reached the age of retirement. As the successor to Dr. Andreen, the Synod elected Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, who had been serving as the dean of the Theological Seminary since 1931. As its new president the Synod chose Dr. Petrus Olof Bersell, a man fifty-three years old, who had distinguished himself as an energetic churchman and a competent administrator while serving as the pastor of the First Lutheran Church in Ottumwa, Iowa, and the president of the Iowa Conference.⁹ The of-

⁶ See President's Report, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1933, pp. 10-24.

⁷ The synodical minutes for the years 1930-1937 exhibit this timid caution as it is reported, time and again, that the Synod decided to postpone action on various proposals and projects "until a more favorable time."

⁸ See "Report of Committee on Church Extension and Home Mission," signed by Peter Peterson, P. O. Bersell, F. O. Hanson, A. R. Johnson, and Otto Leonardson, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1934, p. 89f.; 1935, pp. 84ff.

⁹ See article, "New Leaders to Take Reins," *Lutheran Companion*, June

ficial installation of Dr. Bersell as the new synodical president occurred in Ottumwa, Iowa, October 2, 1935. On that occasion Bersell enunciated the broad principles which were to guide his long and significant administration. He declared,

Externally, changing times will demand changes. . . . But may God make us loyal and zealous to preserve piously that for which our fathers labored so sacrificially and fought so valiantly. . . . There is something distinctive about the Augustana Synod, even in the family of Lutheran Churches in America, which we do well to cherish not merely as an heirloom, but as a vital factor in determining the spirit of the future Lutheran Church in America. . . . It is my earnest desire to sustain and strengthen the bonds of affection between us and the Lutheran Church in the land of our forefathers. . . . We look forward with joy to the day, though it still be far away, when even outwardly we shall be one with the other Lutherans in America. . . . There must not be, there will not be, as far as the Augustana Synod is concerned, any union until there be real church unity in faith and practice. . . . Our home missionary program must be enlarged in scope so that under God we do enter in through the doors of opportunity to minister to the unchurched and unsaved millions of souls in America.¹⁰

The initial task which confronted the new president of the Church was to move the Synod, so to speak, off dead center; to give it a new momentum and direction, to dissipate the enervating depression psychology, and to inspire pastors and congregations once more to begin to plan and act boldly for the future. To realize these objectives, Dr. Bersell inaugurated within a few years of his election, a multiphased program which was so effective in its influence and far-reaching in its consequences that it may justly be called a *New Approach*, a sort of new deal for the Augustana Church. This New Approach, however, was not predicated upon, or derived from, an abstract set of bright and shining theories conceived by armchair churchmen. The components of the program comprised practical measures devised by experienced churchmen to meet specific needs in the Church as they arose. Upon being asked if he came to the president's office with an overall master plan for the Synod, Dr. Bersell has stated that,

I must admit that I never had any *detailed* blueprint or master plan of organization, although I did have a general idea of struc-

15, 1935; excellent historical sketches and analysis of Augustana history are given in *Augustana*, June 6, 13 and 20, 1935.

¹⁰ "Message of the New President," the *Lutheran Companion*, October 5, 1935. This was a remarkably accurate statement of policy and program which characterized Bersell's entire term of office.

ture based very largely on the objectives sought and the pattern set by other organizations. We took on problems, one at a time, and learned by the trial-and-error experience. Every department had to be organized (a) for effective work, (b) for harmonious collaboration with the executive office of the Church and other departments, (c) for service to the entire Church, in close co-operation with the Conferences.¹¹

The New Approach in Augustana may be said to have been launched with the establishment of synodical headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Prior to this time there had been no synodical headquarters in the sense that the Synod maintained a permanent establishment as an administrative center. Indeed, since the Synod had never been incorporated, it could not legally own property in its own name. The president was free to live anywhere he chose, and Dr. Bersell chose to make his home in Minneapolis. Regarding this choice he has stated that,

Minneapolis was chosen for many reasons, among them:

a, Its central and convenient location in the greatest concentration of churches and membership.

b, In that day there was a strong movement in the direction of a union with churches that had a predominant Scandinavian and Middle Western heritage and tradition, as evidenced by the previous organization of the American Lutheran Conference.

c, Up to that time the Minnesota Conference suffered somewhat from a "hangover" of the patriarchal "Minnesota Spirit." Whether deserved or not, the Conference had the reputation of being somewhat insurgent and independent in relation to Synod. Therefore, it was my considered opinion that it would be good for the common cause to establish my office in Minneapolis.¹²

For the first few years the synodical offices were housed in the headquarters building of the Minnesota Conference at 415 Harvard Street, S. E., Minneapolis. This building was sold to the University of Minnesota in 1945, and through fortunate negotiations, arrangements were made for a joint purchase the same year by the Synod and the Minnesota Conference of a splendid building at 2445 Park Avenue in Minneapolis. The purchase price of the new headquarters complex was realized from the sale of the old Minnesota Conference property and from private contributions. Thus, the headquarters property was not financed by the use of synodical funds. It was, however, necessary to incorporate the Synod, so that it could legally hold its own property.

¹¹ Letter from P. O. Bersell, February 26, 1962.

¹² Letter from P. O. Bersell, February 26, 1962.

The purchase price of the building and grounds at 2445 Park Avenue amounted to \$35,000, of which \$17,000 represented the equity of the Minnesota Conference. Hence, by mutual agreement between the synodical administration and the executive committee of the Minnesota Conference, a suite of offices on the second floor of the building was designated as the permanent headquarters of the Minnesota Conference, while the synodical administration and its various agencies occupied the rest of the space.¹³

Concerning this transaction, Dr. Bersell has stated,

When opportunity came to buy the present building on Park Avenue for \$35,000, we discovered that this money was recoverable from conditional donations to Minnesota College by Minnesota citizens. . . . We needed \$30,000 to remodel and refurbish the building for office purposes. This money we solicited and received from individuals from all parts of the Church. Thus, the headquarters property was acquired without cost to the Church itself. It was at this time that the Synod was incorporated so as to own property.¹⁴

The second step in the New Approach in Augustana was the development of an administrative technique which became characteristic of the Bersell administration. This was the technique of increasing the efficiency of a department or agency by concentrating the chief administrative responsibilities in the hands of an executive director or secretary who would implement the policies and programs outlined by a supervisory board, commission or committee. Such an arrangement tended to streamline the administrative structure of the Synod, to pinpoint responsibility, and to simplify the task of maintaining liaison between the department and the synodical administration.

The first department in the Augustana Church to initiate this type of administration was the *Board of Foreign Missions*. Prior to 1937, foreign missions had been administered by a board whose policies and programs were implemented by the chairman and corresponding secretary of the board. These officers were busy pastors and laymen who could give only a small part of their time to the administration of foreign missions. Some of the administrative duties had, from time to time, been delegated to a "field secretary," but his main business was to act as the promotional officer throughout the Synod on behalf of the board. In 1937, however, the Synod authorized the board to employ a full-time executive director of foreign missions.¹⁵ A call was

¹³ *Minutes*, Minnesota Conference, 1946, p. 45.

¹⁴ Letter from P. O. Bersell, February 26, 1962.

¹⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1937, p. 152.

issued to Pastor Hjalmar S. Swanson, Jamestown, New York, who accepted and was installed as the first full-time executive director of Augustana Foreign Missions, at the synodical convention in Lindsborg, Kansas, June 16, 1939.¹⁶ Less than two months after Swanson assumed his new office World War II broke out and plunged the world into a period of extreme crisis. The effectiveness with which the executive director of Augustana foreign missions guided the program during the difficulties of the war period attested to the efficiency of a centralized, co-ordinated type of administration.

The next step in the new approach may be said to have been the inauguration of a new home mission program. "This plan," says Dr. Bersell, "was not concocted in a hurry. In fact, its period of gestation was ten years."¹⁷ The origins of the plan go back to actions taken by the Iowa Conference in 1928, while Dr. Bersell was president of that body, asking the Synod to establish a *synodical* church extension fund which would pool the resources of the various conferences and thus serve to strengthen and co-ordinate, under synodical jurisdiction, the financial program of home missions.¹⁸ Hitherto the Synod had supervised only three outlying "Mission districts," while the thirteen conferences were practically autonomous in the administration of home missions within their own borders.

The Synod received the petition from Iowa with favor and appointed a committee to take the matter under consideration. This committee, of which Dr. Bersell was a member,¹⁹ continued to meet year after year, from 1928 until 1935, in an endeavor to devise a home mission plan and program which would adequately meet the needs of the Church.²⁰ Finally, at the Jubilee convention at Rock Island, 1935,²¹ the committee was ready to present the results of its long and careful study, namely, the new *Home Mission Plan*, which in several respects represented new thinking in the Synod and a radical departure from the old order.²²

In the first place, the Plan in general envisaged a new concentra-

¹⁶ Swanson, *Foundation for Tomorrow*, op. cit., p. 310. *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1939, pp. 150, 290.

¹⁷ Letter from P. O. Bersell, February 26, 1962.

¹⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1928, p. 201.

¹⁹ See previous reference to this committee, *supra*, p. 329, footnote 8.

²⁰ See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1929, p. 209; 1930, p. 123; 1931, p. 109f.; 1932, p. 220f.; 1933, p. 88f.; 1934, p. 89f.; 1935, p. 84f.

²¹ This was the convention at which Dr. Bersell was elected president of the Augustana Synod.

²² "Plan for the Consolidation of the Home Mission and Church Extension Work in the Augustana Synod," *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1935, pp. 84-86.

tion of power and authority in the synodical administration, in terms of centralizing the essential responsibility for home missions in a synodical home mission board, under whose jurisdiction an executive director and a corps of regional directors would work to implement the program devised and authorized by the board. In the second place, the conference boards of home missions were relieved of their autonomous status and independence of action, and given merely an advisory role. It should be noted that this arrangement involved a radical reorientation of the practice which had obtained in the Synod since 1870. The new plan tacitly affirmed the principle of synodical, that is, centralized, authority, in contrast to the older practice of conference, that is, decentralized, authority. To be sure, the advocates of the new Home Mission Plan did not openly assert the supremacy of Synod over conference, for to have done so would have spelled almost certain defeat for the Plan. The Plan was promoted simply on the grounds of greater efficiency to meet increased needs. Even so, many pastors and congregations seemed to sense the tension between Synod and conference, and were not enthusiastic about the prospects of a concentration of synodical power. Of this matter Dr. Bersell has stated,

I sensed (at the convention of 1935) that our Plan was doomed to defeat. Hence I pleaded to postpone action for one more year to give the new administration time to size up the situation.²³

Indeed, the Synod was so wary of the new plan that again at the convention in 1936 no definite action could be taken except to authorize a referendum of the conferences on the question.²⁴ In connection with preparations for the referendum, Dr. Bersell visited every conference in person and pleaded for the Plan. When the referendum was completed all but two of the conferences had given their approval, and on the basis of this approval the Synod, at its convention in 1937, registered its endorsement.²⁵ The following year the Synod approved the new *Central Board of Home Missions*, composed of one pastor and one layman from each of the thirteen conferences, and two representatives of the *Women's Missionary Society*.²⁶ This new board began its operations January 1, 1939, having called Pastor Sigfrid E. Engstrom as the first executive director of Augustana Home Missions and the following regional directors, Pastor G. A. Danielson for the Illinois, Iowa, and Superior Conferences, Pastor C. G. Anderson for the Min-

²³ Letter from P. O. Bersell, *op. cit.*

²⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1936, p. 121.

²⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1937, p. 127f.

²⁶ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1938, pp. 122ff.

nesota and Red River Valley Conferences, Pastor Leslie A. F. Carlson for the Nebraska, Kansas, and Texas Conferences, Pastor Henry J. Hokanson for the New York and New England Conferences, Pastor C. R. Swanson for the Columbia Conference, Pastor J. Herman Olson for the California Conference, and Pastor Anton A. Nelson for the Canada Conference.²⁷

Within two years the effectiveness of the new Home Mission Plan was clearly evident. According to an evaluation given by the president of the Church in 1941, the New Plan had by that time served to give the Augustana Church a new drive and momentum. The Synod could no longer be said to be resting on dead center; there existed now a new sense of purposeful, carefully directed activity. Furthermore, this new activity, centering in home missions and giving to this work a new emphasis and importance, served to make the entire Synod more keenly conscious of this phase of Christian responsibility than it had been for many decades. This new awareness brought substantially greater financial support to this cause, and through the Central Board these increased funds were judiciously and strategically administered so as to avoid waste, duplication and unprofitable investments. Every petition for financial aid from dependent congregations, for example, was given careful scrutiny, and each application was classified on the basis of its future potential. Arrangements were made to weed out chronic dependents and to help beneficiaries to become self-sustaining. Where needless competitive missions had been carried on in some communities, congregations were requested to merge their operations in the interests of conserving money and manpower. Careful surveys of potential new fields were made, and when the Board felt that future potential warranted it, new missions were established and financially undergirded until they became self-sustaining. By such careful review and investigation the entire program of synodical home missions was given a long-range dimension which enabled the Church to chart its course in this field with much more wisdom and insight than had ever been done before. And finally, the New Plan brought the Augustana Synod into intimate contact with the home mission programs and procedures of other Lutheran and Protestant bodies. This enabled the Synod to plan its work in co-operation with other churches, and to share and learn in association with others.²⁸

²⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1939, pp. 128ff.

²⁸ See P. O. Bersell, "Synodical Home Missions a Reality," *My Church*, 1941, pp. 75-91. The structure of the Home Mission Plan is given on page 84, and a map of the Home Mission areas appears on page 88.

In 1949 the Board of Home Missions became the *Board of American Missions* by the amendment of the by-laws and the articles of incorporation of the Board of Home Missions of the Synod.²⁹ This was done to bring the home missions program of the Augustana Church, both as to name as well as organizational structure, more closely in line with similar Lutheran operations in America. In 1950, the Church placed *Evangelism* under the jurisdiction of the Board of American Missions and authorized the calling of a director of evangelism. Pastor William Berg of Rock Island, Illinois, received and accepted the call and continued to occupy this position until the merger in 1962. To assist Dr. Berg in the department of Evangelism, the board called Pastors Reynold N. Johnson, Martin Lingwall, and Willis F. Erickson. Part-time assistance was also given for several years by Dr. Samuel M. Miller.

Upon the untimely death of Dr. S. E. Engstrom, April 28, 1955, the Church called as his successor a former regional director, Dr. Theodore E. Matson, who was then pastor of the Ebenezer Lutheran Church in Chicago.³⁰ Dr. Matson continued in this position until the Augustana Church merged its operations in the Lutheran Church in America, in 1962. In his final report to the Augustana Church, at Detroit, June, 1962, Dr. Matson gave a brief summary of the work of the Board of American Missions since the New Plan went into operation in 1939. Dr. Matson stated:

When the Board of American Missions was established, 434 of the 1,198 congregations of our Church were receiving financial aid. The Church Extension Fund principal totaled \$170,159.87. The budget for 1939 was \$217,000, which represented approximately the sum of the home mission budgets of the 13 conferences and the Synodical Home Mission Board, charged with the responsibility of aiding and directing the work of the 3 mission districts. The total budget for the Board's first year of operation was \$217,000. For 1962, the budget is \$1,053,000.

Of the 257 congregations organized since 1939, 148 are self-sustaining. The aid given the 148 congregations that have become self-sustaining totaled \$1,632,009, an average of \$11,027 per congregation. Aid to all congregations organized amounted to \$3,321,246. Total aid given to all congregations—new and old—amounted to \$5,596,981, representing in excess of 700 congregations.

The Church Extension Fund principal increased from \$170,159.87 to \$2,776,316. . . . The loans granted by the Church Ex-

²⁹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1949, pp. 191-200.

³⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1955, pp. 227ff.

tension Fund total over \$10,400,000. In addition, more than \$1,000,000 has been granted in loans from the Church Building Loan Fund. There were 1,198 congregations in our Church as of January 1, 1939. Due to mergers, dissolutions, and transfers of congregations, the net increase in number of congregations as of January 1, 1962, was only 80, making the present total 1,278. To provide the Board of American and World Missions with income, over and above church budget appropriations, an annual *Augustana Mission Advance* offering was authorized by the Church at its convention in 1948. As of December 31, 1961, these offerings totaled \$4,976,330, of which the Board of American Missions received \$2,307,131. To increase the loaning ability of the board, the Church authorized the Mission Builder program in 1952. The sale of Mission Development Certificates was inaugurated in 1959. Mission Builder loans to congregations have totaled \$2,008,000. Additional commitments total \$245,000. Individuals, congregations, boards, and agencies have purchased Mission Development Certificates in the amount of \$1,645,500. In order to assist congregations in building their second unit and/or church proper, the board established the Church Building Loan Fund. Loans from the Pension and Aid Fund, from college endowments, and other institutions, total to date \$1,027,000. To date, 25 congregations have been assisted.

The Augustana Lutheran Church Women (formerly the Women's Missionary Society) has through the years contributed a total of \$1,847,634 to support the American Mission program.³¹

A further step in the New Approach in Augustana was the creation and reorganization of a number of service departments or agencies which were structured along the same general lines and based upon the same general principles as the department of home missions. In this respect it may be said that the new Home Mission Plan established an important structural pattern for the synodical organizations of the Church.

Among the service agencies to receive early attention by the Bersell administration was that of stewardship and finance. Prior to 1927, the Augustana Church had operated without a synodical budget, in the sense that no co-ordinated attempt was made each year to relate the Synod's income to the financial needs of the Synod's beneficiaries. Though congregations and conferences were indeed urged to do their best to undergird the Church with adequate financial resources, no central agency had the responsibility of ascertaining the total financial needs of the Church for each year and then devising ways and means of meeting them. In 1927, however, the Synod adopted a budget

³¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1962, p. 197f.

system and elected a synodical *finance committee* consisting of two pastors and three laymen "to prepare, submit and recommend to the synodical council a detailed budget for all the finances of the Synod together with apportionments on the Conferences and Mission Districts, and to arrange for the collection and distribution to various synodical institutions."³²

To assist the Finance Committee in its work, the Synod also resolved to elect "a secretary of stewardship . . . he shall be the executive secretary of the finance committee, and it shall be also his duty to present the cause of Christian stewardship, the proportionate giving, the needs of the synodical budget, and such other duties as shall be prescribed throughout the Synod by the finance committee."³³

The chairman of the first synodical Finance Committee was Dr. P. O. Bersell. Other members were Pastor O. J. Arthur, Judge Eskil C. Carlson, Mr. Carl H. Swanson, and Mr. John H. Christianson.³⁴ The first stewardship secretary was Mr. Otto Leonardson, an outstanding layman of the Synod, who began his work July 1, 1928. From the very outset he visited the conferences and met with their executive boards and officers, and called also on the beneficiary institutions of the Synod. He directed the first synod-wide Every Member Canvass in the fall of 1928. He edited and distributed a large number of stewardship tracts, and regularly wrote a stewardship column for the *Lutheran Companion*. Thus, after 1928, the finances of the Synod were managed by a central synodical committee which established fiscal policy, ascertained beneficiary needs, made the necessary allocations upon conferences and mission districts, and through the office of the stewardship secretary carried on a program of stewardship education.³⁵

No sooner had the fiscal program of the Synod been placed on this new and more businesslike basis, however, than the great depression struck the country, and the per capita giving in the Augustana Synod declined from an average of \$22.13 in 1930 to an average of \$13.82 in 1935, and total contributions decreased from \$5,187,062 to \$3,448,003 for the same period.³⁶ At the same time as financial support was showing alarming decline, the needs of the Church, and particularly the program of home missions after 1939 and overseas missions during and

³² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1927, p. 181.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

³⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1928, pp. 36-44.

³⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1928, pp. 37-40.

³⁶ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1960, Augustana Church Statistics, p. 833.

after World War II, were making greater demands than ever before.³⁷ It was to meet this imperative need for greater financial support of the Church's program that the synodical administration turned its special attention to the department of finance to devise ways and means of strengthening its work in the Synod. To this end the department of finance was reorganized in 1942; a *Commission on Stewardship Education* was created which was to exercise jurisdiction and devise new ways and means of making the program of stewardship education more effective in the congregations of the Synod. Mr. Leonardson was named as *Director of Finance* in 1943, and Pastor Thorsten Gustafson was chosen as *Director of Stewardship*.³⁸ The essential task of the Director of Finance was to draw up a synodical budget which would realistically meet the needs of all beneficiaries and make an equitable distribution of this budget upon the various conferences. The Director of Stewardship had the responsibility of motivating the budget, interpreting its meaning and significance to the congregations so that the allocations would be accepted and paid. This division of labor and responsibility would give to each office both the necessary time and a clear-cut definition of responsibility which would enable the secretaries to do a more effective job.³⁹ The effectiveness with which the reorganized department of finance with its program of stewardship education functioned is eloquently reflected in the fact that after 1942 the per capita giving in the Synod took a sharp upward swing, from an average of \$19.68 in 1942 to an average of \$23.90 in 1943. The upward climb continued year after year so that by 1960 the average per capita contribution per year in the Augustana Church reached \$80.88.⁴⁰

³⁷ The budget for home missions in 1935 was \$186,495, in 1940 it was \$228,170, and by 1944 had risen to \$413,770. Similar pressure for increased support came from overseas missions, whose budget in 1935 was \$70,370, in 1940 it was \$133,966, and in 1944 had risen to \$311,189. *Ibid.*, p. 833.

³⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1942, p. 281f.; 1943, p. 286f. The members of the original Commission on Stewardship Education were: Dr. Oscar A. Benson, chairman; Pastor Emmer Engberg, Pastor Richard B. Pearson, Mr. A. B. Strom, Professor Emory Lindquist, and Mr. E. R. Jacobson. Mr. Otto Leonardson and Pastor Richard Pearson served longer than any of their colleagues in the departments of finance and stewardship, spending approximately fifteen years in this important work.

³⁹ Mr. Leonardson continued to serve as director of finance until his retirement in 1952. Pastor Thorsten Gustafson resigned as director of stewardship in 1949 to become president of the New York Conference. He was succeeded by Pastor Martin E. Carlson who served in this capacity from 1949 to 1955, when he became director of finance, a position which he continued to hold until the Augustana merger in 1962. He was succeeded, as secretary of stewardship, in 1955, by Mr. Sam Edwins who continued in this position until the merger.

⁴⁰ See Augustana Church Statistics, Every Five Years, 1860-1940, Every year since 1940, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1960, p. 770.

There was, however, another important reason for the interest of the Bersell administration in the financial agencies of the Augustana Synod. The administration wished to integrate the work of the departments of Finance and Stewardship with the contemplated Centennial Appeal. It was felt that such integration would prove mutually helpful and rewarding, since the Appeal program could make use of the existing facilities of the Finance and Stewardship departments, and these departments would be enriched by the spiritual impact of the appeal.⁴¹ At the synodical convention, held in Rock Island, Illinois, June 1940, President Bersell called attention to the fact that in 1948 the Synod would celebrate the centennial of the beginning of congregational work in New Sweden, Iowa, and two years later, 1950, would observe the founding of the congregation in Andover, Illinois. He proposed that preparations begin immediately to mark officially these historic events by (a) "gathering during the next five years throughout the Synod a sum of money that would be a real thank offering to God, and a real help to the onward march of the Church," and (b) "to set in motion a spiritual advance looking to the winning of souls for the Kingdom that may be added to our household of faith as living members of the Body of Christ."⁴² A special centennial committee was elected to arrange for these preparations.⁴³ After a careful study of the financial needs of the Synod and the conferences with reference to institutional indebtedness, building and endowment needs and sustenance funds, the committee recommended to the Synod in 1941 that a Centennial Offering be received over the next several years in the amount of \$1,250,000, and that at the same time an intensive evangelism effort be made to win new members for Christ's kingdom. The Synod approved these proposals, and thus set in motion one of the most ambitious projects the Synod had ever undertaken.⁴⁴ By synodical action the year 1948 was designated as the Centennial Year.⁴⁵ Dr. Knut E. Erickson, comptroller of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, was chosen as the centennial director who was to head the Centennial Appeal. A special *Commission on Life and Growth* was also chosen to lead the Synod in a deepening experience of gratitude, commitment and

⁴¹ Interview with Dr. P. O. Bersell, May 29, 1962.

⁴² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1940, p. 233.

⁴³ The members of the committee were, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, Dr. Oscar O. Gustafson, Judge Eskil C. Carlson, Mr. Einar G. Carlson, and Mr. Birger Swenson. Mr. Carl H. Swanson, Dr. Emil Swenson, and Dr. D. Verner Swanson were later additions to the committee.

⁴⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1941, pp. 254-259.

⁴⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1942, p. 238.

evangelism.⁴⁶ Although much of the work of the financial campaign fell on the shoulders of the director of the appeal, Dr. Knut Erickson, his work was facilitated by the close co-operation between his office and the synodical agencies of finance and stewardship. A five-year plan leading up to the centennial year was adopted as follows: 1944, Home Missions; 1945, Foreign Missions; 1946, Parish Education and Higher Education; 1947, Works of Mercy; 1948, the Local Congregation. The response of the people of the Augustana Church to the Centennial Appeal was indeed memorable, for while the spiritual impact cannot be accurately assessed, the Centennial Thank Offering by convention time, 1948, totaled no less than \$2,181,776.53.⁴⁷

Another service agency of the Synod which was reorganized and strengthened as a centralized department of the Church was that of *Youth Activities*. Although the Synodical Luther League had endeavored to serve the youth of the Church by providing program helps, conducting youth camps and regional rallies, as well as publishing devotional material suitable for Luther Leaguers, the Synod had long felt that the age group to which the Luther League addressed itself was too limited. There was need to enlarge the scope of the Church's work with its young people in order that there might be fewer losses among those below the age of thirty, and that returning service men and women might be aided in reorienting themselves into the life of home parish. It was the conviction of many, including the Bersell administration, that a strongly centralized synodical agency could accomplish this task more readily than the various conferences. Accordingly, at its convention in 1944, the Synod instructed the president of the Church to appoint a committee to study the advisability of establishing a *Youth Commission* "for the purpose of promoting and co-ordinating all youth activities in the Augustana Church."⁴⁸ The committee reported to the synodical convention in 1945, and recommended the creation of a *Board of Youth Activities of the Augustana Synod*, which would be charged with the general supervision, promotion, and correlation of all activities for youth sponsored by the Augustana Church, from the time of confirmation to the age of thirty, in order that young people might be conserved for the Church and for Christian service. This

⁴⁶ Members of the committee were Pastor Wilton Bergstrand, Pastor S. E. Engstrom, Pastor J. Vincent Nordgren, Pastor S. Hjalmar Swanson, and Mr. Otto Leonardson. *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1942, pp. 284-287.

⁴⁷ See president's report, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1948, pp. 19ff.

⁴⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1944, p. 266. The committee consisted of Dr. Joshua Odén, Mrs. Clarence T. Nelson, Pastor Wilton Bergstrand, Pastor Theodore Palmer, Pastor J. Helmer Olson, and Pastor J. Vincent Nordgren, with the president of the Church acting as an advisory member.

board was to serve in an advisory capacity also to the Board of Parish Education, and was to consist of six members, three lay people and three pastors elected by Synod, with the synodical president, and the president of the Synodical Luther League as *ex officio* members.⁴⁹ The new board was to employ a synodical youth director who would implement the program outlined by the board and guide the activities of the Synodical Luther League. The choice of a director of youth fell upon the executive director of the Augustana Synod Luther League, Pastor Wilton E. Bergstrand, who henceforth combined in his office both the program of the Synodical League as well as the broader activities envisaged by the Board of Youth Activities.⁵⁰ Pastor Bergstrand, ably assisted by his sister, Lorraine Bergstrand, headed the synodical youth program from 1946 until the Detroit merger in 1962.

In reorganizing the service agency which ministered to Augustana youth by broadening its scope of concern and strengthening its centralized structure by combining the Luther League program with that of the central Board of Youth Activities, the Synod undoubtedly succeeded in extending a meaningful ministry to a larger number of its younger constituency than was possible under the former arrangement. But it must also be noted that, like the other centralized agencies, the Youth Board unwittingly tended to foster throughout the Church an increasing dependence upon "the leaders in Minneapolis."

A new synodical service agency came into being in 1946, when the Synod approved the expansion of the activities of the *Augustana Film Service* which had been created in 1945 by action of the Executive Council of the Church.⁵¹ At the Duluth convention in 1946, President Bersell called attention to the fact that "there is throughout the Church an increasing demand for audio visual materials," and to meet that demand the *Augustana Visual Aids Association* was being formed. This association, said the president, would co-ordinate the audio-visual needs, as far as possible, of all departments and agencies of the Synod, and seek to provide adequate materials to meet such needs. The Association was composed of the president of the Church and one elected representative from the departments of Parish Education, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Youth Activities, Stewardship and Finance,

⁴⁹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1945, "Report on Proposed Board of Youth Activities," p. 321. Members of the first Board were Pastors Rudolph Burke, Melvin A. Hammerberg and Arthur I. Anderson, and Mr. Lloyd Schwiebert, Mrs. Clarence T. Nelson, and Mr. Doniver Lund.

⁵⁰ See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1946, Report of Board of Youth Activities," pp. 109-116, and "Report of Augustana Synod Luther League," pp. 268-273.

⁵¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1945, p. 27.

Augustana Book Concern, "and other synodical boards which desire to become members."⁵² These plans were approved by the convention,⁵³ and the department of *Audio-Visual Service*, under the direction of the Augustana Visual Aids Association began operations January 1, 1947, with two trained technicians in charge of the work, Mr. Bruce Sifford, assisted by Mr. Warren Holmen. The constitution under which the new agency functioned stated that the object of the Audio-Visual Service was

1. To prepare audio-visual material on the work of the Augustana Church.
2. To encourage the proper use of available audio-visual aids throughout the Church.
3. To assist in the general publicity program of the Church.⁵⁴

The financial support of the Audio-Visual Service was drawn from the budgets of those agencies which made use of its facilities. By 1952, Audio-Visual Service had demonstrated its usefulness by preparing a number of film strips on a variety of subjects, assembled a selected film library, established a film rental and distribution center which was widely used throughout the Synod, and was conducting audio-visual workshops to teach pastors and teachers audio-visual techniques. At the same time it had become evident that the Association was an unwieldy administrative arrangement. Hence, the Synod in 1951 approved the creation of a *Board of Audio-Visual Service*, composed of five members "of whom not more than three shall be pastors."⁵⁵ At the same convention in 1952, the Audio-Visual Service also petitioned the Synod to be placed on the regular budget of the Church. This petition was approved, and thus the agency became fully and completely a synodically controlled and financed agency. Since the synodical budget was prepared two years in advance, it was not until 1954 that Audio-Visual Service became a full-fledged beneficiary of the synodical budget.⁵⁶

In addition to giving the Church a new and effective teaching aid, the Audio-Visual Service became an immensely effective instrument of publicity for the Synod and its work. It provided a specialized and highly technical channel through which information regarding the Synod was funneled to the various news media of the country, and through which information concerning other religious groups and activities was made known to the congregations of the Synod. Thus,

⁵² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1946, p. 20.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁵⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1947, p. 307f.

⁵⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 316.

⁵⁶ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, pp. 311-316, and budget item, p. 89.

while serving the people throughout the Augustana Church, the Audio-Visual Service became also an important arm of the synodical administration.

Another central agency which was established as a part of Augustana's New Approach was the *Commission on Church Architecture*, which came into being by action of the Church at the convention in Jamestown, New York, 1942. The suggestion for such a department within the administrative structure of the Synod came from the executive director of Home Missions, who reminded the Church in his annual report in 1942, that the increasing tempo of home missions involving the establishment of new congregations and the erection of new church buildings demanded some kind of central agency which could give expert architectural and financial advice to those who sought such help.⁵⁷ Accordingly, the Synod authorized the establishment of the *Commission on Church Architecture*, "composed of five members appointed by the executive committee of the Synod, and that the department directors of home missions and parish education be represented in an advisory capacity on the commission."⁵⁸

Within a few years it became evident that both new as well as old established congregations were turning to the Commission for help, not only to plan new building projects, but, in a surprising number of cases, to arrange fund-raising campaigns for building and renovation programs. The question of the relationship of the Commission on Architecture to fund raising was the subject of careful study for several years.⁵⁹ Finally, at the synodical convention in Washington, D. C., 1950, the Church resolved,

1. That we express our opinion that the Commission on Church Architecture should be reconstituted as a subcommittee under the Board of Finance . . .
2. That a full-time executive be employed to perform the following services:
 - a. Serve the congregation as consultant with the committee in reviewing proposed building plans.
 - b. Prepare literature, audio-visual aids, "Pattern plans" for small churches, sample publicity folders, etc.
 - c. Make services and material available for a fee, for limited periods, to congregations planning building and financing programs.

⁵⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1942, p. 122.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 140. The members of the original commission were: Pastors Clifford A. Nelson, Verner A. Granquist, O. V. Anderson, and Messrs. Elmer L. Edmund and Carl Lof.

⁵⁹ See reports, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1948, p. 339; 1949, p. 311.

- d. Give guidance in entire program of financing involved in a building project.
- e. Represent the Church under guidance of the Board of Finance in solicitation of "larger gifts" for all causes, including the Church Extension Fund, which is of such strategic concern to building financing.
- f. Perform such other duties as may be assigned to him from time to time by the Board of Finance.⁶⁰

The decision to employ a full-time executive director for the department of church architecture was due to the fact that the work of this agency had become so heavy by 1950 that it was no longer possible for a commission composed of busy pastors and laymen to meet the demands laid upon them. On February 6, 1951, the Commission on Church Architecture turned over to the new *Committee on Church Architecture and Building Finance*, its assets, materials, and files and declared itself dissolved, and the new agency took over the operation.⁶¹ Pastor Carl H. Sandgren was employed as the executive director of the department, and continued in this position until the merger of the Augustana Church.⁶²

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the New Approach in the Augustana Church was the separation of Augustana College and Augustana Theological Seminary which occurred in 1948. This episode stirred the temper and emotions of the entire Synod as nothing else had done, perhaps, since the Waldenstrom controversy in the preceding century. In the heat of the debate words were spoken, accusations were made, threats were hurled, and pressures were exerted which caused rifts and wounds which will remain as long as some of the active participants are among the living. A number of factors were involved. In the first place, the question of separation had become an emotional issue in the long-drawn contest between sectionalism and centralization which had intermittently stirred the Church since the days of Hasselquist.

Within this aspect of the question there were honest differences of informed opinion regarding the relationship which ought to exist between the various schools of the Church and their supporting constituencies. On the one hand, there were those who felt that all colleges should be owned and supported by the Synod, while others felt that no college should be synodically controlled. On the other hand,

⁶⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1950, p. 300.

⁶¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1951, p. 310.

⁶² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 71f.

there were sectional jealousies and petty loyalties masquerading as convictions of principle which counted misinformed stubbornness to be courage and strength. In the second place, there were differences of viewpoint regarding the educational philosophy which ought properly to apply to the program of higher education in the Church. Regarding this question there were some who held that the college and seminary ought not to be separated because the combined institution, "Augustana College and Theological Seminary," at least approximated the educational ideal of the founding fathers. It was alleged that the fathers envisaged a school in which the study of theology would be set, as in the great universities of Europe, in the context not of isolation from, but of association with, the other academic disciplines of a college curriculum. The names of Esbjörn, Hasselquist and Olof Olsson were called upon to sanctify this viewpoint.

Although there were perhaps very few who were ready to reject out of hand this high ideal of Christian education, there were many who asked the idealists to face realistically the actual situation which had developed at "Augustana College and Theological Seminary." Over the years the college department had outgrown the seminary department to the extent that the seminary was completely overshadowed and pushed into the background, both as to numbers and as to demands for new resources and greater support. Consequently, the time, energy, and concern of the board of directors were necessarily given mostly to the college, and the seminary, so it was alleged, must be content with remnants of attention. It was claimed that something of the same thing prevailed regarding financial and other resources. Much of what might otherwise have accrued to the theological seminary was of necessity being apportioned to the maintenance of the growing and expanding college. It was not that the college was getting too much, but that the seminary was getting too little. It was said that as a combined institution, neither the college nor the seminary was free to plead its own cause before the public. In the third place, the question of separation pitted the advocates of change against the proponents of the *status quo*. It is doubtful if there were many—or any—in the Augustana Church who advocated change simply or chiefly for the sake of change. Those who sought to alter the established order of things at least claimed for their viewpoint reasonable motivations. But there were doubtless some Augustana folk who objected to change simply because they liked the comfortable feeling of things as they were.

The *status quo* is the familiar way of life, and those who are not

being hurt by it, or whose personal ambitions are not frustrated by its continuance, are not likely to be enthusiastic about exchanging what they know for that which is unknown and unfamiliar. Furthermore, in the church, where change is so often viewed with suspicion and the *status quo* is so frequently interpreted as synonymous with God's will, and identified with that which is right and true, any effort to modify the *status quo* will invariably evoke opposition. To the proponents of the *status quo* in Augustana there was something dear and cherished—almost sacred—about the combination of "Augustana College and Theological Seminary." Hallowed names and precious memories were intimately associated with that combination. To tear college and seminary apart seemed to many to be almost an act of desecration.

Finally, there was the clash between vested interests. The administration of "Augustana College and Theological Seminary" constituted a vested interest, on the one hand, and the administration of the Augustana Synod comprised the vested interest, on the other. Both of these interests may be said to have been "vested" in the sense that each had, so to speak, a particular stake in the outcome of the contest. The administration of the "College and Seminary" wished to preserve what it considered to be the historical integrity of the institution. Whatever anyone might be saying regarding the inequity of attention and resources between college and seminary must be tempered by and understood in the light of the realities of the actual situation and the ultimate benefits accruing to both departments of the school because of their association with each other. The administration sought to clinch the argument by citing the past presidents of the school as being of the same opinion.

In this connection it is both interesting and significant to note that at no time in the history of the Augustana Church, as the protracted debate dragged through the years regarding separation of college and seminary, has the suggestion for separation ever been espoused by the central administration of the school. The presidents of "Augustana College and Theological Seminary" have been in singular agreement about maintaining the college and seminary as one corporate institution. This agreement must be seen, not as some esoteric or higher wisdom or deeper insight given only to educational administrators, but rather as the very natural reluctance on the part of a vested interest to surrender any area of its inherited prerogatives. It has been charged that this reluctance was an expression of personal ambition, unwarranted selfishness, and reactionary stubbornness. And it would be strange, indeed, if some measure of these human traits were not to

be found in the attitudes of even Christian educators, as among other mortals. But it must also be recognized that the administration of any institution, educational or otherwise, which is not jealous of its prerogatives, and looks not upon these prerogatives as being vitally connected with the welfare of the institution, is not worthy of its trust.

The synodical administration, for its part, approached the problem of separation of college and seminary with an altogether different set of presuppositions and concerns. The Bersell regime cannot be said to have been primarily motivated by philosophy or theory. Indeed, it was characteristic of the New Approach that it inaugurated programs first and then sought to develop a theology or a philosophy to justify them. The leaders of the New Approach were activists and realists, and this basic posture determined their attitude toward the separation of the college and seminary. To the synodical administration there was one aspect of the college and seminary problem which stood out beyond all others, namely, that the present arrangements had been for many years—and continued to be—the cause of discord, disunity, and sectional friction throughout the Synod. Such discord and disunity constituted a serious internal problem for Augustana in view of the accelerated program of activity which the New Approach envisaged for the Church.

Although the Synod had spoken to the problem numerous times in the past, and always in terms of approving the continuation of the combination of college and seminary, nevertheless, the problem would not die, but kept reappearing again and again, disturbing the tranquillity and concord of the Church. Now it seemed, however, that the majority would approve separation, even though a minority would be offended by such a divorce. Hence, the synodical leaders grasped what appeared to be a propitious moment in the history of the Augustana Church to solve a long-standing problem, and thus take a long step toward the establishment of a new era of synodical unity, peace, and good will. On this matter Dr. Bersell has stated that,

The number of conferences, to whom was delegated considerable autonomy, grew from three to thirteen. With this growth, local and territorial interests naturally came to the fore. . . . One by one these issues have been resolved. Strangely, the most divisive of these issues had to do with unity; that is, the union of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, as the common institution of learning for an undivided church. This was also the last major internal issue to be resolved.⁶³

⁶³ P. O. Bersell, "Notes on the Separation of Augustana College and Theo-

The events leading to the "great divorce" of 1948 go back to the early days of the Synod. Augustana Seminary and College was established in 1860 as a school belonging to the entire Augustana Church, and to its support every congregation was expected to contribute. But in 1862 the Minnesota Conference organized its own regional school, in 1881 the Kansas Conference did likewise, the Nebraska Conference established its school in 1883, and the eastern section of the Synod organized a college in 1893.⁶⁴ As each of these schools was formed, the loyalty, interest, and financial support of that section which the school was intended to serve were channeled in its direction. This sectional loyalty and concern for the welfare of conference schools raised the question of the relationship which these sections ought to sustain toward Augustana College. Was it fair to require those who were supporting their own conference schools to be liable also for the support of Augustana College? This seemed like "double taxation" to many. The prevailing sentiment in Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, and elsewhere seemed to be in favor of making Augustana College an Illinois Conference institution, while the Theological Seminary would be retained as the one and only educational institution maintained and supported by the entire Synod.⁶⁵

The question of regional support for Augustana College was also connected with the deeper problem of the relationship of the conferences to the Synod. It involved the tension between the forces of centralization versus decentralization. Conference particularism, coupled with economic need and sectional loyalty, conspired to create a sentiment in favor of the separation of Augustana College and Seminary. This sentiment remained little more than a "rumbling in the hustings" until 1886, when for the first time the question of separation of college and seminary was brought to the floor of the Synod.⁶⁶ In accordance

logical Seminary," Manuscript, November 10, 1961. The main arguments on both sides of the question of the separation of Augustana College and Seminary are expressed in a series of articles in the Augustana press as follows: the *Lutheran Companion*, March 27, April 3, 10, 17, 1946; April 2, June 4, 25, July 9, 1947. *Augustana*, April 1, 22, July 22, 1946; July 21, 1947. The two articles which most adequately express and summarize the contending viewpoints are: "A Divorce in 1948?", by Conrad Bergendoff, the *Lutheran Companion*, April 3, 1946; "Augustana College and Theological Seminary," by C. J. Sodergren, the *Lutheran Companion*, April 17, 1946.

⁶⁴ Other schools were organized in the Synod but Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota, Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas, Luther College, Wahoo, Nebraska, and Upsala College, East Orange, New Jersey, survived.

⁶⁵ Arden, *The School of the Prophets*, op. cit., p. 200f.

⁶⁶ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1886, pp. 20-46.

with President Erland Carlsson's suggestion, a special committee, composed of representatives of every conference and every institution of the Synod, was selected and charged with the task of finding a solution to the problem. This committee of thirty-seven men, which included the most competent leaders among both pastors and laymen, met in Rock Island, August 24, 1886, with Erland Carlsson presiding. The committee's report was given at the synodical convention in 1887, and included the following resolutions:

1. That Augustana College continue to be the common institution of the Synod and that our theological seminary remain forever (för evärdeliga tider) the Synod's common institution for the training of its pastors, and that no conference or section of the Synod shall be permitted to establish or operate a theological seminary.
2. That conferences which support their own institutions of higher learning shall pay 12½ cents of the 25 cents apportionment to the common institution in Rock Island. . .
4. That a committee be appointed to prepare a curriculum for all the colleges and academies of the Church and report to the next synodical convention.⁶⁷

The report of the committee was adopted.⁶⁸ It was thought that the question of separation had now been settled once and for all. But the rumblings persisted, and on several occasions the president of the Synod felt obliged to address himself to this undercurrent of discontent as he gave his annual report to Synod.⁶⁹ The invitation by the General Council to merge Augustana Seminary with the proposed German Seminary in Chicago, which continued to exercise the Synod from 1872 to 1891, also helped to keep the issue of separation alive.⁷⁰

The matter did not again become the subject of public debate at a synodical convention, however, until 1926, when the question regarding the increase in apportionments to Augustana College and Seminary eventuated in a resolution to the effect that

Augustana College be separated from Augustana Theological Seminary as to property, funds, management and control, and Augustana Theological Seminary and Augustana College be placed under separate boards, providing the three Conferences, Illinois, Iowa and Superior, are willing to take over Augustana College.⁷¹

⁶⁷ *Referat*, Augustana Synod, 1887, p. 35f.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁶⁹ See for example, President's Report by S. P. A. Lindahl, *Referat*, 1890, p. 9-21; by P. J. Swärd, *Referat*, 1894, pp. 15-24.

⁷⁰ See Arden, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-205.

⁷¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1926, p. 63.

When this proposal reached the three central conferences, they each in turn declined the "take over," which meant that the status of the college and seminary remained unchanged.⁷² Here the matter rested until 1930, when the Kansas Conference, struggling during the great depression to keep the doors open at Bethany College, petitioned the Synod

1. That steps be taken that Augustana Theological Seminary be maintained as a separate and independent institution from Augustana College.
2. That a separate board be elected by the Synod, and that the members of this board be elected in such a manner as to give the different parts of the Synod, as far as possible, equal representation.
3. That a just division of funds and property now available . . . be made and transferred to the Seminary.
4. That a special committee be elected to prepare a constitution for Augustana Theological Seminary, and report to the synodical convention in 1931.⁷³

The petition from Kansas was referred to the General Board of Education of the Synod, which took two years to prepare its report. At the Fargo convention in 1932, the Board recommended that "Augustana Theological Seminary be neither separated from Augustana College nor governed by a separate Board." It placed before the Synod, instead, two alternative proposals.

1. That the funds of the seminary and college departments not already allocated be distributed as follows:
 - a, The sum realized from the sale of the Paxton farm (\$50,000) shall be divided into three equal parts two parts of which shall be allocated to the collegiate department and one part to the seminary.
 - b, In allocating the Jubilee Fund the sum of 20 cents per communicant member, using the statistics of 1909, shall be allocated to the seminary and the remainder to the college department.
2. a, That Augustana Theological Seminary be incorporated as a separate institution and that a portion of the present grounds of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, and especially that portion containing the present seminary buildings, with a large adjoining space of ground, be deeded over to the Augustana Theological Seminary corporation.
 - b, That a separate board for Augustana Theological Seminary be elected by the Synod.

⁷² *Minutes*, Illinois Conference, 1927, p. 139; Iowa Conference, 1927, p. 98; Superior Conference, 1927, p. 55.

⁷³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1930, p. 96.

- c, That said board shall consist of eight members, five clergymen and three laymen, together with the president of the Synod, as *ex officio* member.
- d, That funds not already allocated be distributed as in plan one.⁷⁴

In response to this report the Synod resolved to accept the recommendation of the board with respect to the division of property and funds. Regarding the relocation of the seminary, a special *Seminary Commission* was chosen "to make a thorough survey and investigation of the question of the eventual permanent location of the theological seminary." The members chosen by the Church for this commission were: Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, who at that time was dean of the seminary, Dr. C. J. Sodergren, Dr. D. Verner Swanson, Mr. John Christianson, and Judge Eskil C. Carlson. The report of this special commission is an interesting and significant document for, whatever may have been the personal viewpoint of the individual members (and there is no dissenting opinion attached), the report of the commission is unambiguous in what it recommends, and since it was signed by every member of the commission, it ostensibly reflected the present conviction and judgment of every member. After careful study and deliberation the commission concluded:

1. Awaiting possible and probable developments in the field of theological education within the Lutheran Church in America we propose the following enunciation of a policy for the future;
 - a, That Augustana Theological Seminary be moved.
 - b, That it be moved to Chicago or its vicinity.
2. To facilitate the achieving of such a program we propose that the Synod elect a permanent committee to consider ways and means for the eventual removal of the seminary.
3. That for the immediate future your Commission recommends the following:
 - a, In order to avoid confusion in the reports, and in order to prevent any possible discrimination in favor of either college or seminary, a complete and actual separation of the funds and assets of the seminary from those of the college should be effected upon a fair and equitable basis. . .
 - b, We propose that the scope of authority of the present Seminary Committee of the Board be widened to that of an executive committee to function on behalf of the seminary. This seminary committee would be charged with the control of the seminary, under the general control of the board.
 - e, We advocate further the establishment of the office of seminary manager. The incumbent of this office should handle

⁷⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1932, p. 84f.

the income and expenditures of the seminary, he should be in general charge of the seminary grounds and buildings and should be under the immediate jurisdiction of the seminary executive committee. . . . Among his duties would be that of seeking increased funds for the seminary within and outside the Synod.⁷⁵

When this report came to the floor of the Synod and the delegation was asked to vote on the proposition that Augustana Seminary be moved, the motion was defeated by a vote of 125 to 110, while the proposition that the funds and assets be separated was carried.⁷⁶ It must be noted at this point that the proposal to move the seminary out of Rock Island was defeated by only fifteen votes, which indicated that the Church was very nearly evenly divided on the question, and that sentiment for removal had been growing over the years. The vote is particularly significant when it is recalled that the vote was taken at a time when both the nation and the church were gripped by depression psychology, and the prospect of providing new facilities for the seminary must have seemed particularly grim. But the fact that in spite of the prevailing depression, nearly half of the voting delegation at the convention of 1933 approved the removal of the seminary from Rock Island meant that even though the proposal had been defeated for the time being, the Church had not yet spoken the final word in this matter.

No further action was taken by the Church regarding "Augustana College and Theological Seminary" until 1944, when it was proposed that the constitution of the institution should be brought up to date so as to incorporate those changes in administration and practice which had been adopted by the Church, and which, as far as it concerned the seminary, involved the office of dean, the seminary committee of the board as a permanent standing committee, and the four-year theological program including the intern year.⁷⁷

In the process of considering the revised constitution, the Synod also decided at its convention in 1945 that

The executive committee of the Synod and two additional members, elected by the Synod, make a study of the support and control of Augustana College by the Illinois, Iowa, and Superior Conferences in consultation with representatives of said conferences, and submit their findings and recommendations to the next con-

⁷⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1933, pp. 69-77.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁷⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1944, pp. 89-94.

vention of the Synod, subject to previous consideration and action by the three conferences.⁷⁸

The personnel of this committee was: For the Synod: Dr. P. O. Bersell, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, Dr. D. Verner Swanson, Dr. O. O. Gustafson, Mr. Harold Smith, and Mr. Harold LeVander.

For the Illinois Conference: Dr. C. O. Bengtson, Dr. J. A. S. Landin, Mr. E. W. Swanberg, Mr. Tage Joranson, and Mr. Arthur Larson. For the Iowa Conference: Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, Pastor C. P. Everett, Mr. F. F. Peel, and Judge Eskil Carlson. For the Superior Conference: Dr. William Siegel and Pastor T. E. Johnstone.

The personnel of this committee is interesting and significant, since it represents most of the outstanding leaders associated with the New Approach in the Augustana Church. It is from this point in the negotiations that the initiative is being taken by the synodical administration to deal decisively with the question of separation. And the manner of dealing is revealed in the following excerpt from President Bersell's annual report of 1946,

There should be synod-wide support of Christian higher education. I dare say that it should be fairly well equalized over the various parts of our Synod. To accomplish this, greater power should be given to the Commission on Christian Higher Education as a co-ordinating agency so that a synod-wide program may be worked out. This suggestion positively does not carry with it any intention to eliminate local or conference management of our colleges. In fact, it is my considered opinion that we will never get very far in the solution of this whole problem until Augustana College is given the same status as the other colleges under conference ownership and management.⁷⁹

The committee elected in 1945, led by Dr. Bersell, reported at the convention in 1946, that a consultative meeting had been held in Chicago, December 13, 1945, with representatives of the school and conferences in attendance. Regarding this meeting it was reported that

The consensus of the meeting was that the present arrangement is not satisfactory, and that something should be done to remedy the situation so as to eliminate the anomalous relationship of Augustana College to the Synod on the one hand and the conferences on the other which fails to foster a sense of immediate responsibility and promotes friction with other conferences owning and supporting their own colleges.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1945, p. 132.

⁷⁹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1946, p. 18.

⁸⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1946, p. 98.

The following proposals of the committee were adopted by the Synod:

1. That the suggested plan of a divided board for Augustana College and Theological Seminary be rejected as impracticable.
2. That Augustana College and Theological Seminary be divided into separate legal entities.
3. That Synod shall continue to own, control, support, and operate the Augustana Theological Seminary.
4. That the Illinois, Iowa, and Superior Conferences be requested to declare willingness to assume the ownership, control, support, and operation of Augustana College.
5. That a committee of eleven be elected to study the mechanics, legal problems, and constitutional changes involved and report to the 1947 conventions of the three conferences and synod.⁸¹

When the Synod met in Kansas City, Missouri, for the convention in 1947, the "committee of eleven" presented its report, accompanied by all the legal documents necessary for adoption to complete the separation of the college and seminary, including a constitution for the seminary. All of these documents were approved by the Synod. The committee reported that two of the three conferences had rejected the offer of Synod to assume ownership and full control of Augustana College. Therefore, it was resolved that the three conferences assume responsibility for the financial support of Augustana College and that the members of the board of directors be nominated by the three conferences and elected by the Synod. It was also resolved to transfer the institution's Illinois state charter, dated February 16, 1865, to Augustana College, and to incorporate Augustana Theological Seminary under a new charter, with a board of twelve members, plus the president of the Church as *ex officio* member. The synodical constitution was also properly amended to provide for these changes by a vote of 268 ayes and 112 nays. Boards of directors were also elected for Augustana College, and for Augustana Theological Seminary.⁸² When, in accordance with the action of Synod, the Secretary of State of the State of Illinois, Mr. Edward J. Barrett, on July 12, 1947, affixed his signature to the new Articles of Incorporation of Augustana Theological Seminary, thereby making that institution a completely separate and independent legal entity, the solution to the "College and Seminary question" had been finally achieved.

⁸¹ P. O. Bersell, "Notes on the Separation, etc., *op. cit.*, see also *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1946, pp. 97-106.

⁸² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1947, pp. 90-121.

The battle was not quite finished, however. The next year, 1948, when because of the centennial celebrations, there was a plenary representation at the annual convention of the Church, the opponents of separation asked that the matter of separation be reconsidered and be decided at the plenary convention by secret ballot. A motion to rescind the actions of the two previous synodical assemblies was put to the vote, requiring a two-thirds majority to carry. When the votes were counted the tellers announced that the motion had been lost, with 424 ayes and 493 nays. Thereupon the Synod adopted a final report of the committee on separation, and fixed the date of August 31, 1948 as the date for separation of the college and seminary. Upon nomination of the board, Pastor Karl E. Mattson, president of the New England Conference, was elected president of the seminary.⁸³

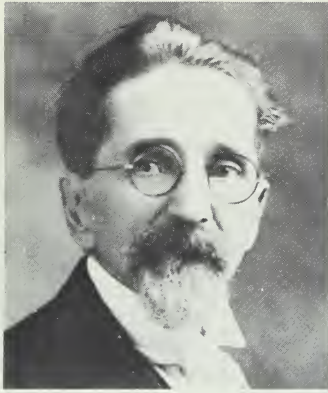
Augustana Mission Advance

One of the most amazingly successful projects which was initiated under the jurisdiction of the New Approach was the program called *Augustana Mission Advance*. This venture was launched in 1949 in order to enable the Church to take advantage of the unprecedented opportunities to expand its work at home and abroad by raising large supplementary funds for missions above and beyond the usual contributions and regular budget allocations. Augustana leaders looked upon missions as more than a holding operation—it must be a growing and expansive enterprise. Accordingly, the Boards of Home Missions, Foreign Missions and Finance pooled their efforts to set in motion the program of Augustana Mission Advance.⁸⁴ By word of mouth, through the church press, and by means of specially prepared promotional materials, the three boards combined their efforts to prepare the Synod for the first appeal which was scheduled for the Epiphany season, 1949. The people of Augustana were asked to respond to this unified appeal for missions in a manner and spirit worthy of the opportunities which confronted the Church.

The response to the first appeal for funds was somewhat disappointing. Augustana Mission Advance had been compelled to share its place with a number of other appeals, with the result that only sixty per cent of the congregations in the Synod responded. But those

⁸³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1948, p. 115.

⁸⁴ A report of the organization of A.M.A., personnel of officers and committees, program and procedures, is given in *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1949, p. 228f.



S. A. LINDHOLM
Director, 1911-1927

Pension and Aid



TITUS A. CONRAD
Director, 1927-1935



O. T. ENGQUIST
Director, 1935-1956



L. EDWIN WANG
Director, 1956-1962



Bishop and Lady von Scheele, representing the King of Sweden.

The Jubilee of 1910

Jubilee Hall as seen from the entrance to Augustana College



Distinguished guests at the Jubilee, 1910

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Bishop von Scheele | |
| 2. Governor Eberhart of Minnesota | |
| 3. Dr. Eric Norelius | } The only three still living who attended
Constituting Convention, 1860 |
| 4. Pastor G. Peters | |
| 5. Mr. John Erlander | |





REPRESENTATIVES FROM LUTHERAN CHURCH,
TANGANYIKA, AFRICA

Missionary Pastor William Jacobson
Pastor and Mrs. Mshana
Mr. Joshua Meena

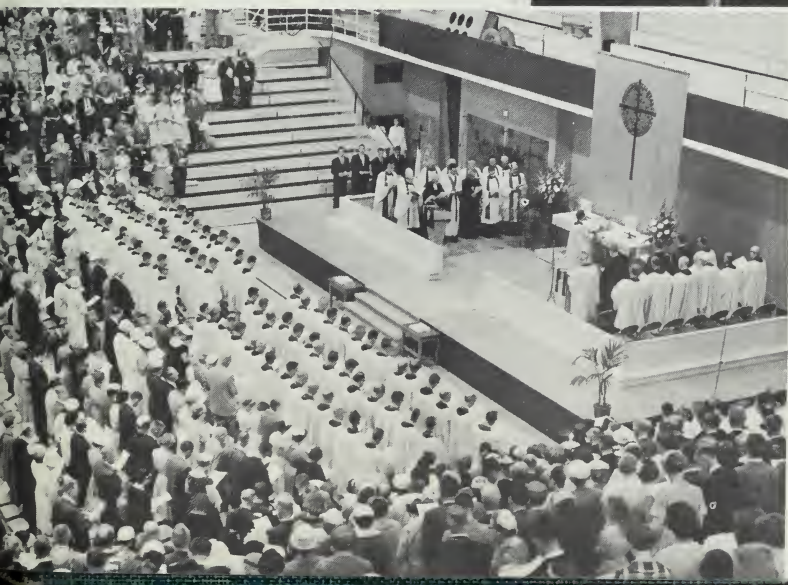
MONUMENT AT JEFFERSON PRAIRIE, WISCONSIN

Dr. Carl Segerhammar, Vice President
Archbishop Gunnar Hultgren, Uppsala, Sweden
Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, President of Augustana
Church



CENTENNIAL 1960

CENTENNIAL ORDINATION SERVICE
June 12, 1960





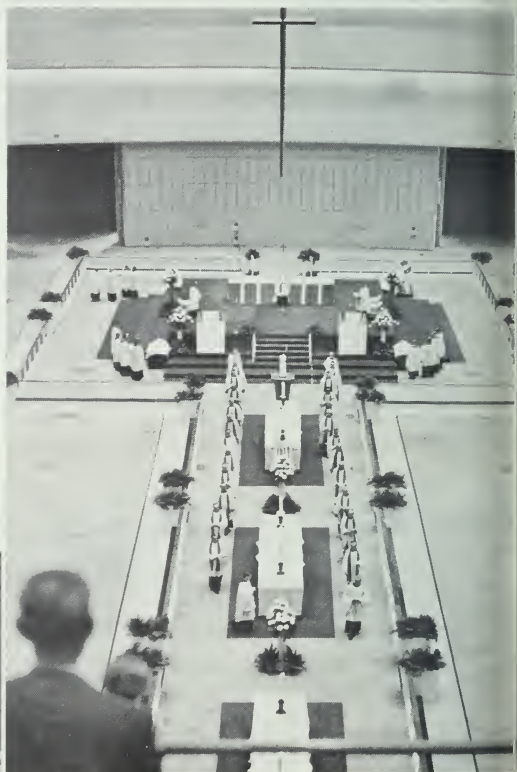
SIGNING THE MERGER DOCUMENTS

Left to right, Seated, the Rev. Dr. Franklin Clark Fry; the Rev. Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen; the Rev. A. B. Farstrup and the Rev. Dr. Raymond Wargelin. Standing are the Rev. Dr. George F. Harkins; the Rev. D. Verner Swanson; the Rev. W. R. Garred and the Rev. Philip A. R. Antilla.

THE DETROIT CONVENTION, 1962

"That they may be one"

Joining four candles to form a single flame symbolizing the merger at Detroit.



FIRST COMMUNION SERVICE
Lutheran Church in America

who did contribute to the appeal raised a total of \$142,232.50.⁸⁵ In making their report of this first appeal of Augustana Mission Advance to the Church, the leaders in charge of the project were optimistic about the future, and confident that as the Church became more keenly aware of the needs and opportunities in the area of missions, the future response to the appeals of Augustana Mission Advance would be much greater. In this hope and expectation they were not disappointed. The Augustana Mission Advance continued each year, from 1949 through 1962, to present the cause of missions and ask for supplementary funds. A special emphasis was given to missions during 1954, which was known as *Advance for Christ*, which extended through 1955. During the period of thirteen years of missionary appeal, each of the two succeeding synodical administrations⁸⁶ gave this project every possible encouragement. The people of the Augustana Church responded to the appeals of Augustana Mission Advance by contributing a total of \$2,246,854.21. The response to *Advance for Christ* amounted to \$2,463,362.36. This means that from 1949 through 1962 the people of the Augustana Lutheran Church raised the sum of \$4,710,216.57 for missionary purposes above and beyond the regular budgetary allocations.⁸⁷ In his final report to the Church, the chairman of Augustana Mission Advance, Dr. William J. Siegel of Minneapolis, stated,

The primary object in the establishment of Augustana Mission Advance was to provide additional funds for both our Boards of American and World Missions to carry out their missionary witness on behalf of our Augustana Church. Approximately five million dollars have been contributed for missions through Augustana Mission Advance and *Advance for Christ*. . . . About \$1,509,000 have been placed in the Church Extension Fund, which now totals more than two and a half million dollars. During these thirteen years the Board of World Missions has expanded its work into several new areas. These include Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South America, and Borneo. In addition, many more missionaries have been added to our principal field in Tanganyika, East Africa. The extensive educational activity carried on by the Augustana Mission Advance Committee during these years is difficult to evaluate in figures, but should not be underestimated. The money that has been contributed as well as the increas-

⁸⁵ See report of the chairman and treasurer of A.M.A., *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1950, p. 237f.

⁸⁶ The administration of Dr. Oscar A. Benson, 1951-1959, and Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, 1959-1962.

⁸⁷ For the figures for each year see reports of the chairman of A.M.A. in the annual *Minutes of the Augustana Lutheran Church*, 1949-1962.

ing number of men and women who volunteer for missionary work at home and abroad is indicative of growing missionary interest. This interest would never come into being without missionary information. It also seems to me that the Augustana Mission Advance activity has participated in giving Augustana a new sense of the oneness of our mission work. Today we realize more than ever before that American and World Missions is one task. Never, I believe, has there been such a sense of partnership between both boards as we have today.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ *Annual Reports*, 1962, Augustana Lutheran Church, p. 203.

Augustana Social Action

The Emergence of a New Social Conscience

PARALLEL TO AND ASSOCIATED with the development of the New Approach in the Augustana Church was the emergence of a new social consciousness. This is not to suggest that prior to the third decade of the twentieth century the Augustana Church had no social conscience. Indeed, a vital part of the Synod's Swedish heritage was the code of ethics and morality which had been bequeathed by Pietism, and was emphasized as the barometer of the sanctified life. It was a code that tended to cast the Christian life in a legalistic mold, as it inveighed against immorality, drunkenness, dancing, card playing, and the desecration of the Sabbath. From the beginning Augustana took this code seriously. This is attested by the fact that the early synodical minutes not only report numerous cases of church discipline involving both pastors and laymen, but contain also many references in presidential reports and committee resolutions to the social order, to its evils and temptations against which all Christians must be on guard, and to the Christian's responsibility to act as a good citizen of the republic.¹

With respect to the Church's direct responsibility to become involved in the Christianization of the social order, it must be said, however, that for the first three quarters of its existence, the Augustana Church exhibited the same spirit of quietism which has characterized so much of Lutheran history both in Europe and in America. Reasons for this quietistic spirit in Augustana lie near at hand. In the first place, it must be recalled that for approximately the first sixty years of its life, Augustana was predominantly an immigrant church, preoccupied with the immense task of ministering to masses of incoming immigrants. As long as this pattern prevailed the Synod

¹ For a brief study of code morality in the Augustana Church see article by Emmer Engberg, *Centennial Essays*, Rock Island, Illinois, 1960, pp. 122ff. According to Hasselquist and his colleagues, good citizenship included opposition to the institution of slavery. Most Swedes in America shared Hasselquist's antislavery sentiments and were staunch supporters of the Union cause. See, Ander, *Hasselquist*, *op. cit.*, p. 152f.

was isolated, both by choice and by circumstance, from many of the pervasive American influences which, like the social gospel, might otherwise have invaded the thinking and practice of the Synod. In the second place, until the process of Americanization had reshaped basic Augustana attitudes, the Synod stood aloof from the ecumenical movement with its powerful social concern. After the Synod's participation in the Stockholm Conference on Life and Work in 1925, however, social reorientation was marked and rapid. In the third place, the most challenging social problems resulted first from urban situations. As long as the Augustana Church remained largely a rural synod, it was neither ready nor equipped to handle the acutely unique social problems posed by an urban society. Finally, quietism in the Augustana Church, as in Lutheranism generally, has theological motivations. It has often been pointed out that the Lutheran doctrine of the two realms has tended to inhibit Lutheran social responsibility. According to this doctrine a sharp distinction is made between the function and task of the Church in the spiritual realm and that of the State in the secular or temporal realm. Both Church and State are expressions of God's will. The State is to establish justice and maintain order, guided by reason; the Church is to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments, guided by revelation. Neither must invade the precincts of the other. Thus, the proper way to deal with social problems is for the Church to concentrate on the task of preaching and of sacramental administration, since the transformation of society can only be accomplished by transforming individuals. Therefore, the Church must not become entangled in political questions, or too directly involved in social issues. In addition to the doctrine of the two realms, it may also be said that its confessional tradition has tended to make the entire Lutheran Church, including Augustana, somewhat tardy in adapting to the complexities of an American environment. The process of reinterpreting the Lutheran Confessions of the sixteenth century in the light of twentieth-century needs has required both time and patience.²

About 1935, however, there began to emerge within the Augustana Church a new and livelier social awareness and concern. This

² For an excellent study of the development of social consciousness in the Lutheran Church in America, with special reference to the Augustana Synod, see Robert Lowell Anderson, *The Awakening Social Consciousness of the Lutheran Church in America Since World War I, with Special Reference to the Augustana Lutheran Church*. Unpublished Master's dissertation Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1959. Copy in the library of the Lutheran School of Theology, Rock Island Campus.

new social consciousness may be briefly described as a clearer recognition by the Synod that the Christian Church is a part of the society in which it exists, and that a part of its calling under God is to bear a corporate witness to the problems of society even while it uses its corporate influence to see that, in so far as possible, the will of God is done in all areas and relationships of human life.

This new attitude undoubtedly gradually evolved from several sources. There was, first of all, the effect of the process of Americanization, by which the walls of isolation were broken down and Augustana was drawn more intimately into the context of American community life. This served to engender within the Synod a new and keener awareness of the social problems in American society. Furthermore, as Augustana began to participate in the ecumenical movement and discovered the strong social emphasis of the Life and Work Movement, the Synod was confronted with a new dimension of community responsibility to which it sought to respond. Then too, there was the great depression which compelled all Americans to take a new and more careful look at political and social issues.³ The Synod's new social outlook found its deepest and most profound motivation, however, in the theological reorientation which eventuated through the new Luther studies in both Europe and America. The Luther renaissance in Sweden was particularly significant for Augustana.

Led by such eminent Swedish scholars as Einar Billing, Nathan Söderblom, Gustaf Aulén, Ragnar Bring, Gustaf Wingren, Gustaf Tornell, Herbert Olsson, and Anders Nygren, fruitful investigations into Luther's theology yielded new insight into the meaning and relevance of the Reformation for the twentieth century, and particularly in the area of social responsibility. The Swedish theologians, together with other European and American scholars, came to the conclusion that quietism has misunderstood and, therefore, misrepresented the real meaning of Luther's ethic, and that a correct and true understanding of Luther's thought will reveal that his doctrine of the two realms does not exclude but rather includes the secular and temporal realm within the scope of God's redeeming and sanctifying grace. The Christian community is called to be the effective instrument through which divine grace is brought to bear on society.⁴

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 183ff.

⁴ Howard Hong, "Liberalism and Lutheran Reconstruction, 1914—" in Harold Letts, ed., *The Lutheran Heritage*, Vol. II, *Christian Social Responsibility*. Philadelphia, 1957, pp. 45ff. See also Martin J. Heineken, "Luther and

These important Luther studies elicited a flood of literature in America, and some important writings in this field came from Augustana scholars. Dr. A. D. Mattson, professor at Augustana Seminary, was particularly active in promoting the new social consciousness within the Synod. Working from Lutheran theological premises, Mattson sought to reinterpret the earlier "social gospel" so as to bring it into harmony with Lutheran doctrine and make its principles operative within Lutheran circles. In numerous articles in the church press, in his classes at the seminary, and particularly through the publication of two books, *Christian Ethics*⁵ and *Christian Social Consciousness*,⁶ Mattson pleaded for a greater sense of social concern within the Christian Church, and specifically within the Augustana Synod. Dr. Edgar M. Carlson, who in 1944 became president of Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota, also made significant contributions to the new social outlook by writing a number of perceptive articles for the church press⁷ and the publication of two important books, *The Reinterpretation of Luther*⁸ and *The Church and the Public Conscience*.⁹ The former volume was received not only by the Augustana Church but by an American public generally as a valuable introduction to and excellent analysis of, the Luther renaissance in Sweden, with particular reference to the so-called Lundensian theology. Carlson's Luther study interpreted to American readers the new theological insights which derived from "motif research," a part of which emphasized the necessity for greater Christian social action. Other scholars in the Augustana Church aided and encouraged the new social outlook. Conrad Bergendoff, C. G. Carlfelt, Paul Andreen, Oscar A. Benson, I. O. Nothstein, William Siegel, Karl E. Mattson, and A. F. Schersten were the most frequent, but by no means the only, contributors of numerous articles and book reviews on various phases of social issues which appeared in almost every issue of the *Augustana Quarterly* and the *Lutheran Companion* from 1930 to 1950.¹⁰

There were others too, who in their own way encouraged the new social attitude in the Synod. Judge Luther W. Youngdahl, former

the 'Orders of Creation' in Relation to a Doctrine of Work and Vocation," *Lutheran Quarterly*, IV, November, 1952, p. 397f.

⁵ Rock Island, Illinois, 1947.

⁶ Rock Island, Illinois, 1953.

⁷ "Can the State Be Christian?" *Augustana Quarterly*, XXVI, 1947, pp. 51-59.
"The Prophetic Interpretation of History," *Augustana Quarterly*, XVIII, 1939, pp. 322-332.

⁸ Philadelphia, 1948.

⁹ Philadelphia, 1956.

¹⁰ Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

governor of Minnesota, who was appointed to the Federal bench by President Harry Truman, distinguished himself as a leader whose political views and actions were motivated and informed by Christian principles. As a state governor, his liberal program included hospital reform, a state-wide survey to learn how many displaced persons his state could settle and support, and a broad program of social welfare. As a Federal judge he received national attention for his open support of civil liberties while trying the famous Lattimore case. As an active Augustana churchman, Judge Youngdahl has frequently addressed such groups as youth conventions, college and seminary convocations, seminar conferences of both laymen and pastors, in the interests of greater Christian social action. His social philosophy has frequently been expressed in the church press through articles and papers on current social issues. Judge Youngdahl's successors in the governor's mansion in St. Paul, the Honorable C. Elmer Anderson and Orville Freeman, both members of the Augustana Church, have also been known for their strong support of Christian social action.¹¹

The growth of a deeper sense of social responsibility has also been fostered by the successful interracial parish programs, such as those in the Salem Lutheran Church on Chicago's south side, under the ministry of Pastor Philip Johnson, in the Augustana congregation, Houston, Texas, led by Pastor Paul Seastrand, and in the Gustavus Adolphus Church, New York, where Pastor Glen Pierson has been the shepherd. Similarly, when Augustana pastors, Bernard Spong, of Gary, Indiana, and Charles Bergstrom, of Springfield, Massachusetts, led their communities in a campaign against civic vice and corruption, the nation, as well as the Augustana Church, took new cognizance of the role which the Christian church can play in strengthening the forces of decency and righteousness.

Three prominent Augustana laymen, one a doctor and two of them attorneys, deserve mention for their work in stimulating a greater social concern in the Augustana Church. Dr. Robert Holmen, St. Paul, Minnesota, the physician, and Dr. Wendell Lund, Washington, D.C., and Mr. Harold LeVander, South St. Paul, Minnesota, the attorneys, have written and spoken extensively on behalf of Augustana social action. They have served the general work of the Church through membership on various committees and commissions. By the policies they have advocated, and by their own personal influence they have

¹¹ Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 144f.

sought to guide the Augustana Church in the direction of a greater social consciousness.¹²

Thus, through the combination of historical circumstances and the personal influence of outstanding church leaders, including both pastors and laymen, the earlier quietism which characterized the social attitude of the Augustana Church gave way to a new and deeper social conscience. It was within this context that the Minnesota Conference in 1936 petitioned the Augustana Church to create an agency to study and define the Synod's position on war and the liquor problem. At the synodical convention in 1937, the study committee which had been appointed the preceding year, was reconstituted, in accordance with its own recommendation, as the Synod's first *Commission on Morals and Social Problems*, consisting of six members elected by the Church, with the synodical president as the seventh and ex officio member. The scope of the Commission's task was broadened to include not only the issue of war and the liquor problem, but also the family, marriage and divorce, birth control, use of leisure time and amusements, gambling, stewardship, crime and kindred problems.¹³ This action by the Synod led to the subsequent establishment of similar commissions and committees in several of the thirteen conferences of the Church.¹⁴ In 1957 the name of the Commission on Morals and Social Problems was changed to *Commission on Social Action*, though the function and responsibility of the Commission remained exactly what it had previously been.¹⁵

Through the work of the synodical Commission, and the analogous conference agencies, the social consciousness of the Augustana Church matured. The social pronouncements which the Church was encouraged by these agencies to make, constitute a most important and historically significant expression of the modern ethos of the Augustana Church.

¹² See *Lutheran Companion*, May 14, 1942, pp. 622-625; January 15, 1942, pp. 40-41, 80-81; September 17, 1958, p. 8f.

¹³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1937, p. 238.

¹⁴ By 1947, ten years after creation of the Synodical Commission, the following conferences had permanent committees on social action, California, 1947, p. 51; Illinois, 1947, p. 95f.; Iowa, 1947, p. 103f.; Kansas, 1947, p. 48; Minnesota, 1947, p. 48f.; Nebraska, 1947, p. 91f.

¹⁵ Many pastors and laymen have served on the Synodical *Commission on Morals and Social Problems* and its successor the *Commission on Social Action*. Only one member, however, has the distinction of having served without interruption as a member and the chairman of this agency since the formation in 1937, namely, Dr. A. D. Mattson of the seminary faculty.

*The Social Pronouncements of Augustana*¹⁶*Church and State*

Prompted by the First Amendment to the Federal Constitution, setting forth the principle of the separation of Church and State, the Augustana Church has recognized that both Church and State has its own separate and distinctive function, and that neither must be permitted to invade the precincts of the other. On this basic premise the Church has protested every attempt to appoint an American ambassador to the Vatican, or to use public funds for the benefit of parochial schools.¹⁷ The principle of separation of Church and State, however does not involve political indifference or apathy regarding civic affairs. As citizens of the state, members of the church should be concerned with the affairs of government, participate in civic programs, and thus bring their Christian witness to bear upon politics and community endeavors at all levels. Christians who are qualified should also be encouraged to seek public office.¹⁸

Communism

In 1947 the Augustana Church adopted a resolution which warned of the dangers of Marxian Communism which "involves a materialistic interpretation of life which excludes God, as the ultimate ruler of history." Members of the Church were urged to "fight the aggressive propaganda of this philosophy of life by a wholehearted application of our Christian faith to the social maladjustments of our time."¹⁹ This resolution reflects the Church's growing awareness of Communism as a secularized religion, and the resolution is significant as an affirmation by the Augustana Church that the proper way to fight Communism is not by adopting its tyrannical methods, as extremists on both the left and right tend to do, but to apply Christianity in our modern world in such a way as to eliminate the social and political injustices which constitute the seed beds in which Communism thrives. This was also the essential intent of the resolutions adopted by the Synod in 1950 and 1954, calling for exposure of all forces in

¹⁶ The significant resolutions of the Augustana Church during the period 1937-1956 have been compiled and published in a booklet entitled, *Social Pronouncements of the Augustana Lutheran Church and Its Conferences*, Rock Island, Illinois, 1956. Subsequent actions by the Church are also included in the discussion which follows.

¹⁷ *Minutes, Augustana Synod*, 1952, p. 379.

¹⁸ *Minutes, Augustana Synod*, 1958, p. 215.

¹⁹ *Minutes, Augustana Synod*, 1947, p. 328.

the nation who would subvert American freedom either by destroying the judicial order based on law,²⁰ or by "abandonment of accepted orderly methods of investigation, the misdirection of legislative inquiry to propaganda ends, and the usurpation of constitutional safeguards resulting in the violation of the rights of the accused."²¹ The latter reference reflects the reaction of Augustana to the McCarthy investigations.

Dancing

As the heirs of a pietistic tradition, the rank and file of Augustana clergy and laity traditionally looked upon dancing as an evil which true Christians must eschew. Though there were from time to time feeble efforts to change this position, the Church maintained an attitude of uncompromising opposition to dancing until after World War II. During the war, when military units occupied the campuses of the church colleges, dances were sponsored on school property by the military as a part of the regular recreational program. Though this provoked some opposition in the Church, dancing on the campus of church-related colleges was gradually accepted. When the Augustana Church issued its manifesto on dancing in 1950, it sought to steer a middle course between those who were still uncompromisingly opposed to the dance and those who were either indifferent or favored church sponsorship of such recreation. Thus, the Church through the Commission worded the resolution so as not to condemn those who approve the dance while it avoided giving sanction to a practice about which many sincere members have scruples. The question of dancing was left to the conscience of each individual and to the judgment of the several college administrations. The Church warned, however, that if dancing was to be a part of college student activities, it "shall be so supervised that it does not reflect adversely on the standards of the Church and school." The resolution on dancing concluded with the statement: "Lastly, we call upon the members of our Church, old and young, to join in fervent prayer for the realization of the kingdom of God among us. The problem of dancing is but one of the symptoms of the inroads of secularism upon the Church. There are greater, more fundamental problems."²²

²⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1950, pp. 320-323.

²¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1954, p. 231.

²² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1950, pp. 321-323.

Gambling

The most important statement of the Augustana Church on the subject of gambling was issued in 1938, when the Church through its Commission defined the evil character of gambling by quoting the famous dictum of Herbert Spencer to the effect that gambling is "a kind of action by which pleasure is obtained at the cost of pain to another. The happiness of the winner implies the misery of the loser. This kind of action is, therefore, anti-social, it sears the sympathies, cultivates a hard egoism, and so produces a general deterioration of character. It is a habit intrinsically savage." The statement goes on to assert that gambling "is an attempt to get property without paying the price for it. It is robbery by mutual consent, just as dueling is murder by mutual consent. . . . It is a sin that cuts across and ignores the will of God by removing the acquisition of wealth from the realm of reason and conscience." On the basis of this definition, the Church forbade the use of raffles, lotteries and all other games of chance in the congregations of the Synod, and urged "concerted and vigorous action against all further efforts to legalize any form of gambling, whether on the part of city, state, or national government."²³ Similar action was taken by several of the conferences.²⁴

The anti-gambling action reflects the growing alarm in the Augustana Church regarding the increasing prevalence of gambling in American society, and particularly the sanctification of gambling by certain religious groups who employed gambling as a means of raising money for religious purposes. The Augustana resolution was predicated on the premise that the end does not justify the means.²⁵

Labor

In the wake of the bloody riots which attended the railroad strike of 1887 which broke out when the major railroads east of the Mississippi instituted a sudden wage cut of ten per cent, the Augustana Church at its annual convention in Chicago that year adopted the following resolution:

Regarding the anarchistic, socialistic, and related labor upheavals, we as an evangelical Lutheran Church body affirm the principle that the individual's Christian social and political free-

²³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1938, p. 223f.

²⁴ See *Minutes*, New York Conference, 1952, p. 38. *Minutes*, Kansas Conference, 1954, p. 94.

²⁵ Interview, A. D. Mattson, October 12, 1962.

dom is one of the most precious rights of every person, which we deem it our duty to protect and defend with all legitimate means; and therefore, we earnestly warn our members against membership in or support of all such organizations, whatever their name may be, which oppress their fellow men by deciding under what conditions they shall be permitted to work, or buy or sell.²⁶

The opposition to organized labor which is reflected in this resolution was an attitude which the Augustana Church shared with virtually all Protestant churches of that period. It was a time when Protestantism in America presented a massive, almost unbroken front in its defense of the social *status quo*. The outbreak of large-scale labor warfare seemed to many to be explainable only in terms of human depravity. Some of America's most prominent preachers and evangelists therefore advocated repression of "the rabble" by the sternest measures.²⁷

As the industrialization of the nation continued to develop, however, labor and capital began to recognize more clearly their need of each other. At the same time insistent voices inside and outside the American churches were calling for labor reforms for the benefit of the working man, and the labor movement itself was maturing and becoming a more responsible social force. Thus, the earlier opposition and suspicion regarding labor unions gradually diminished.²⁸ A liberalizing social philosophy began to assert itself, emphasizing the right of the laboring man to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining. It made its most effective impact upon the churches, including Augustana, through the emerging ecumenical movement. For example, the *Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America*, organized in 1908, promulgated a *Social Creed* which called for equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life; for the abolition of child labor; for adequate regulation of all conditions of labor; for the right of all men to the opportunity of self-maintenance; for the welfare and protection of all workers from hazards of occupational accidents, unemployment, illness, and old age; for the right of employers and employees alike to organize for collective bargaining and social action; for adequate compensation for work, and for conciliation and arbitration in labor disputes.²⁹ In 1937, the *World Conference on Life and*

²⁶ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1887, p. 22.

²⁷ See Henry F. May, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America*, New York, 1949, pp. 91ff. See also A. D. Mattson, *Christian Social Consciousness*, Rock Island, Illinois, 1953, pp. 190-195.

²⁸ May, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-111.

²⁹ W. W. Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America*, rev. ed., *op. cit.*, p. 549f. See also Mattson, *Christian Social Consciousness*, *op. cit.*, p. 160f.

Work, which met in Oxford, England, with representatives from most of the Protestant churches of the world, adopted a similar statement which affirmed the right of labor for collective bargaining by representatives of its own choosing.³⁰ And in 1938, the *American Lutheran Conference*, of which Augustana was a member, adopted a resolution which supported labor's right to organize and bargain.

The Augustana Church shared in the growing sympathy toward organized labor. After deliberating on the matter for two years, the Synod in 1939 adopted a resolution which gave unequivocal endorsement to the responsible labor movement in America, and enunciated the Christian principles upon which endorsement was predicated. The resolution stated, in part, that

1. We endorse the stand taken by the Oxford Conference on Life and Work, that "labor has intrinsic worth and dignity, since it is designed by God for man's welfare. The duty and right of man to work should therefore alike be emphasized. In the industrial process labor should never be considered a mere commodity. In their daily work men should be able to recognize and fulfill a Christian vocation. The working man . . . is entitled to a living wage, wholesome surroundings, and a recognized voice in the decisions which affect his welfare as a worker."

2. That the Synod stands for the right of the employee and employer to organize for collective bargaining; the safeguarding of all workers from harmful conditions of labor and occupational injury and disease . . . and for the abolition of child labor.

3. That we stand for release from work at least one day in seven, and a reasonable work week commensurate with the productivity of industry and the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the laborer . . .

4. That we also emphasize that it is the responsibility of the worker and employer to work for the public good and not to abuse their power by trespassing upon the legitimate rights of others . . .³¹

To this basic affirmation regarding labor, the Augustana Church at its convention in 1954 added the following resolution:

That the Church memorialize all its institutions to observe the principle adopted by our Church, and all major church denominations, of recognizing the right of labor to bargain collectively through representation of their own choosing.³²

By these pronouncements the Augustana Church has given clear and unequivocal evidence of its interest and concern regarding organized labor as a legitimate instrumentality for the promotion of social justice.

³⁰ Mattson, *op. cit.*, p. 201f.

³¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1939, p. 264.

³² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1954, p. 228.

Liquor

Over the years the Augustana Church has given more attention to the question of the use of liquor than to any other social problem. From the earliest years of the Synod, warnings were issued to the people concerning the evils of strong drink. As early as 1875 the Church cautioned its members about even a moderate use of liquor because it might lead to excess. In 1880 the Women's Christian Temperance Union asked the Synod to state its position on the question of temperance. The Synod replied:

We hold that God's Word teaches the duty of strict and careful temperance. We hold that it is the duty of the Christian Church to see that all her members lead strictly sober lives and to discipline them for intemperance arising from the use of intoxicating liquors.

We have a rule that our pastors shall preach at least once a year on the duty of temperance . . .³³

Since that time the Synod has adopted numerous resolutions expressing its opposition to the use of liquor and its support of temperance.³⁴ At the synodical conventions held in 1904 and 1909, the Church adopted resolutions in support of the Anti-saloon League, and called not only for temperance but for total abstinence from the use of liquor.³⁵

The Commission on Morals and Social Problems promulgated a statement on liquor which the Synod adopted in 1938, and which undoubtedly constitutes the most significant pronouncement ever made by the Augustana Church on this question. The statement affirms that, "The Augustana Synod has always recognized the liquor traffic as a destroyer of souls and therefore, as an enemy of the church. The Synod has been justified in this attitude, because the liquor traffic challenges the church with grave social problems in its heartless waste of human resources and human life."

The grave social problems include highway and other accidents caused by intoxication, the physical damage to the human body, the reduction of family income and consequent lowering of the standard of living and disruption of family life, the degrading of moral and spiritual values, the increase in crime and delinquency and consequent rise in the cost of crime prevention and rehabilitation. The

³³ A. D. Mattson, *Polity of the Augustana Synod*, op. cit., p. 308f.

³⁴ See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1882, p. 79; 1888, p. 81; 1889, p. 83; 1890, p. 81; 1904, p. 127; 1909, p. 156, 157; 1914, p. 32; 1917, p. 167; 1919, p. 159; 1924, p. 28, 1926, p. 32; 1930, p. 45; 1934, p. 26.

³⁵ See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1904, p. 127; 1909, p. 156.

Synod therefore resolved to urge pastors and people to inaugurate a well-planned, informative educational program throughout the Church and local communities, based on the teachings of God's Word and taking into account the accumulation of scientific knowledge regarding the harmful effects of the use of liquor.³⁶

Important action was again taken in 1956 when the Synod adopted a resolution which recognized the alarming rise of alcoholism in the nation. The Church protested the widespread use of all advertising media by the liquor interests to encourage greater national consumption of liquor. The resolution also acknowledged the effective program of rehabilitation carried on by Alcoholics Anonymous. In its endorsement of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Church urged that "we encourage our pastors and members to acquaint themselves with the help of Alcoholics Anonymous and refer alcoholics to local chapters. We urge our congregations to make available their facilities for local chapters of Alcoholics Anonymous to hold their meetings . . ."³⁷

Marriage and Divorce

The Augustana Church has often given consideration to questions relating to marriage and divorce.³⁸ In its pronouncements upon these questions, the Synod has reflected its pietistic background. This is most clearly evident in the legalistic manner with which it has handled the problem of divorce. Prior to 1906, the Synod recognized only one legitimate cause for divorce, namely adultery, and took the position that divorced persons should not remarry.³⁹

At its convention in 1906, the Synod adopted the *Theses on Marriage and its Relation to Divorce* promulgated by the General Council. This statement recognized two legitimate grounds for divorce, adultery and wilful desertion, and affirmed the right of the innocent party to remarry.⁴⁰ By adopting the *Theses*, however, the Synod did not alter its basic attitude and approach, it merely broadened the base of its premises. Again, when the Augustana Church spoke to the problem of divorce in 1923, declaring that it favored "the enactment of uniform marriage and divorce laws by the constituted authorities of the land," it was still seeking a solution in human relationships by way of law.

³⁶ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1938, p. 224f.

³⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1956, p. 386f.

³⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 34; 1877, p. 47; 1880, p. 85; 1906, pp. 142-145; 1923, p. 174; 1925, pp. 168ff.; 1939, p. 264.

³⁹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1870, p. 47; 1880, p. 85.

⁴⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1906, pp. 142-145.

This legalism appears also in a resolution adopted in 1925, which declared that "marriage cannot be annulled or dissolved except by death, adultery or fornication, or malicious and permanent desertion."⁴¹

Upon the recommendation of the Commission on Morals and Social Problems, the Synod at its convention in 1939 took a new and more evangelical approach to the question of marriage and divorce. The resolution which was adopted that year stated that, in view of the rising divorce rate, a new emphasis should be given throughout the Church to the sanctity of the marriage relationship. Therefore, "recognizing the home as a basic institution for the welfare of human society, the Synod urges its pastors and educators to carry on an educational program with respect to the marriage relationship and its significance. . . . Whenever divorce occurs it is the result of sin. We urge our members to seek the counsel and mediation of their pastors before resorting to divorce to the end that every possible influence may be exerted to prevent marriage from becoming a failure. When, because of the hardness of men's hearts, divorce has taken place, it is the duty of the Church to exercise its disciplinary powers according to the congregational constitution, in the interest of the temporal and spiritual welfare of the individuals concerned."

In this resolution the Augustana Church is seeking to deal with the question of marriage and divorce within a new frame of reference. Its basic approach is by way of education, illumination, and pastoral counseling. This does not imply, however, that henceforth the Church will no longer seek to regulate its practice in this area of its responsibility. It means that legalistic considerations have become secondary. The resolution concludes by stating that "the Synod forbids its pastors to officiate at a marriage of persons concerning whom they do not have a satisfactory assurance that they accept and have a sincere purpose to abide by the Christian ideal of marriage." Furthermore, in a tacit acknowledgement that marriage is also a civil transaction, the resolution approves of "uniform marriage and divorce laws for the nation, requiring among other matters a medical certificate for marriage and providing for a period of at least five days between the application for a license and marriage."⁴²

The last action in relation to this question which the Augustana Church took was the adoption in 1956 of a resolution which warned against "mixed marriages." Whereas inter-faith marriages often involve

⁴¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1925, pp. 168ff.

⁴² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1939, p. 264.

a compromise of the faith, and frequently result in marital unhappiness and disruption of normal home life, the Synod warned its people against "mixed marriages," and urged the inauguration of a program of education and pastoral counseling.⁴³

Race Relations

Since the Augustana Church has had few congregations in the South, outside Texas, the major problems and tensions attendant upon racial differences in America have not been as acute as in some other religious bodies. There have indeed been a number of instances when local congregations have been confronted with difficulties encountered in the process of integration. The Synod in general, however, has not been particularly harassed by racial tension.

The Augustana Church has, nevertheless, been aware of its responsibility as a religious force in the American community to lend its best support to the easing of racial tensions and the solution of racial problems. The action which the Synod took in 1948 is clear evidence of this awareness. The resolution adopted that year was first initiated by the *Committee on Social Trends* of the National Lutheran Council, and submitted to Augustana and other Council members for consideration. After almost no debate, the following statement was adopted:

Whereas God is the Creator and Father of all races, and all races have a common origin and hence common human qualities, and

Whereas the Christian ethic demands mutual good will, justice and co-operation among all racial groups and appreciation and respect for human personality in every racial group,

Be it resolved:

That the Augustana Synod condemn all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination and urge the promotion of equal rights and opportunities in reference to cultural, social, economic, civic, and religious matters.⁴⁴

The basic policy articulated in the resolution of 1948 was given further emphasis and support in 1956 when the Synod adopted a more elaborate statement which specified a number of areas in which members of the Synod should express their sense of Christian brotherhood. Members are urged to "discourage any activity in their communities

⁴³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1956, p. 384.

⁴⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1948, p. 341.

which would seek to circumvent orderly judicial procedures in the implementation of the Supreme Court decision regarding segregation," while they are encouraged "to oppose all forms of racial discrimination" in housing, employment, public assembly, public transportation, or schools. Congregations are urged to "include all unchurched persons in their communities in their programs of evangelism without discrimination as to race, color or national origin," and those congregations which have continued to minister to their communities in spite of major population shifts are commended. Members of integrated congregations who wish membership transfer on grounds of racial discrimination are urged "to examine their consciences in the light of Holy Scriptures, and in the doctrines and decisions of the Church, specifically that God has created all men in His image, that Jesus Christ has given His life for the salvation of all men, that the Holy Spirit would call men into the fellowship of the Church."⁴⁵

Responsible Parenthood

The accelerated growth of the world's population, especially in the underdeveloped areas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, has posed a social problem which must be solved, to a large degree, at the religious level. The questions of birth, family, and parenthood are inescapably related to man's religious instincts. Thus, the question of birth control in an exploding world population has compelled the Christian churches of the world to speak to the issue, to take a stand, and give leadership in an area which has been called "the world's most neglected social problem."

In the past quarter of a century most of the major denominations of Christendom have given the question of planned parenthood new and closer attention.⁴⁶ So far as Protestantism is concerned, the most advanced leadership has come from the Anglican Church. Since World War II, this communion has taken the lead in the reformation of the traditional view of the relation of parenthood to the other purposes of marriage.⁴⁷

In America, the Augustana Church in 1954, adopted a resolution on *Responsible Parenthood* which the Commission on Morals and

⁴⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1956, p. 386f.

⁴⁶ For the most adequate and recent study of this development see Richard M. Fagley, *The Population Explosion and Christian Responsibility*, New York, 1960, especially pp. 160-223.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Chapter XIII, pp. 189ff.

Social Problems had composed, based upon statements prepared by the Commission on Social Relations of the American Lutheran Conference. This Augustana resolution was hailed as a significant contribution, offering not only a new norm of excellence for the churches of the Lutheran tradition, but suggesting also a new approach to the problem for American Protestantism in general. Indeed, at the meeting of an international study group to consider "Responsible Parenthood and the Population Problem," convened at the instance of officers of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, at Mansfield College, Oxford, England, April 12-15, 1959, the statement of the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church in 1958 and the resolution of 1954 of the Augustana Lutheran Church in America were quoted and referred to as the most mature and helpful expressions yet made regarding the relationship of religion and the churches to the problem of planned parenthood and the world's population explosion.⁴⁸

The Augustana pronouncement of 1954 emphasizes the right of every child to love, care, and nurture, and any decision to space births must be predicated upon this right. The two key paragraphs of the Augustana statement on Responsible Parenthood are:

So long as it causes no harm to those involved, either immediately or over an extended period, none of the methods for controlling the number and spacing of the births of children has any special moral merit or demerit. It is the spirit in which the means is used, rather than whether it is "natural" or "artificial," which defines its "rightness" or "wrongness." "Whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31) is a principle pertinent to the use of the God-given reproductive power. . . . An unrestrained production of children without realistic regard to God-given responsibilities involved in bringing children up "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4) may be as sinful and as selfish an indulgence of the lusts of the flesh as is the complete avoidance of parenthood. God does not expect a couple to produce offspring at the maximum biological capacity. The power to reproduce is His blessing, not a penalty upon the sexual relationship in marriage.⁴⁹

Social Security

When the Social Security Act was adopted by the Congress of the United States in 1935, there was a good deal of sentiment in the

⁴⁸ Interview with Dr. A. D. Mattson, October 12, 1962. Dr. Mattson attended the meeting in Oxford, England.

⁴⁹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1954, pp. 229ff.

nation which, on the basis of the principle of the separation of Church and State, opposed the inclusion of ministers as beneficiaries. It was obvious, however, that ministers of religion constituted a segment of the population which needed the kind of help Social Security was designed to give. A considerable number of clergymen have served parishes in which the salary was not high enough to enable the pastor to set aside a sufficient competence to meet the needs of his retirement years. The result has been that too often retired ministers have suffered actual want and hardship.

The Augustana Church was one of the religious bodies in the nation which sought to have the Social Security Act amended so as to include ministers under its provisions. Working through its own Commission and through the channels of the National Lutheran Council, the Synod urged "members of the Congress of the United States to amend further the Social Security Act of 1935 so as to make citizens who are ministers of religion eligible, without reservation, as beneficiaries of Social Security provisions."⁵⁰

In 1954 the Congress amended the Social Security Act so as to include any minister of religion who elects to become a beneficiary. This amendment became effective in 1955. Thereupon, the Synod urged its pastors to take advantage of this provision and to make application for Social Security benefits. All but a very few followed the counsel and enrolled under the amended provision as beneficiaries of Social Security.

Traffic Safety

At the Seattle convention in 1961, the Augustana Church took official recognition of the fact that driving an automobile involves moral responsibility. A resolution was adopted which stated that:

Whereas, for the past few years 38,000 persons have been killed each year on our highways and streets, and millions have been injured, many of them permanently, and

Whereas, automobile driving presents an opportunity to make personal application of religion in a daily activity . . .

Therefore be it resolved that the Augustana Church urge its constituency to remember at all times,

a) The sacredness of life,

b) The responsibility of the Christian to observe all laws and regulations established to insure the greatest good and freedom for the greatest number of citizens, and

⁵⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 379.

c) The obligation of pastors and people alike by precept and example to emphasize thoughtful concern in the support of efforts of national, state, and local safety organizations.⁵¹

War and Peace

The most significant statement which the Augustana Church ever issued on the question of War and Peace was promulgated at the synodical convention in 1939, when the world was trembling on the brink of World War II. The statement approved the declaration of the Oxford Conference which affirmed that,

Wars, the occasion of war, and all situations which conceal the fact of conflict under the guise of outward peace are marks of a world to which the church is charged to proclaim the gospel of redemption. War involves compulsory enmity, diabolical outrage against human personality, and wanton distortion of truth. War is a particular demonstration of the power of sin in the world, and a defiance of the righteousness of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. No justification of war must be allowed to minimize or conceal this fact.⁵²

On the basis of such a definition of war, the Synod registered its unqualified opposition to war as an acceptable means of settling international difference. At the same time it opposed "the sale of all munitions, materials, and implements of war to all aggressor nations, engaged in declared or undeclared war," for the Church holds that "the teachings of Jesus give no sanction to war but enjoin peace."

After the United States became involved in World War II, the Synod resolved that, "We reaffirm our love and loyalty to our country and our willingness to give our lives in its service. . . . We are aware of our obligation as a Church to bring the message of faith, hope, and courage to all men. . . . The Synod urges its members to remain loyal to Christ, to be on guard lest the sanction of the Church be given to anything which is contrary to the spirit of Christ."⁵³

This cautious attitude in time of war reflects the disillusionment which the Augustana Church and its people felt regarding war. The support which was given came from a penitent people, rather than from a nation mad with war hysteria. After the conclusion of the World War II, the Synod urged the United States Government to seek for a real and lasting peace based upon Christian principles

⁵¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1961, p. 222.

⁵² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1939, p. 266.

⁵³ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1942, p. 233.

rather than upon the delicate balance of power politics. It opposed universal military training and the establishment of missile bases overseas, and urged that the United Nations become the forum for the equitable adjudication of international differences.⁵⁴

On the eve of World War II, the Synod adopted a resolution which stated that

The Lutheran Augustana Synod recognizes the authority of properly constituted government. . . . We believe the Government should not violate the Christian conscience by seeking to compel conscientious objectors to engage in combatant military service. We ask exemption from all forms of combatant military service for all conscientious objectors who may be members of the Augustana Synod.⁵⁵

This expression of support for the conscientious objector expresses the concern of the Church for the freedom of every citizen from coercion which would compel an individual to violate his Christian convictions. It may be said, however, that though the resolution itself is laudable, it would have been given more substance and significance, if the Augustana Church would have done more to support the conscientious objectors who served their country in various noncombatant positions during and after the hostilities.

In spite of the numerous social pronouncements of the Augustana Church, the Synod cannot be said to have retreated from the fundamental premise that the chief task of the Christian Church in the world is the proclamation of the gospel and the bringing of individuals to a living faith in Jesus Christ. The Augustana Church has never repudiated the traditional Lutheran position that society cannot be saved until individuals become Christian. Nevertheless, within the framework of this fundamental theological position, a significant development of social consciousness has occurred within the Augustana Church, particularly during the last twenty-five years of its corporate existence.

⁵⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1946, p. 297f.

⁵⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1941, p. 234.

Destiny Fulfilled

WORLD WAR II, with its unparalleled violence and destruction, its cruelty and oppression causing unprecedented human suffering and want, emphasized as nothing else could the urgent need for Christian unity throughout the world. Furthermore, the great postwar Christian world assemblies, the Lutheran World Federation meeting in Lund, Sweden, the International Youth Conference in Oslo, Norway, the World Sunday School Association in Birmingham, England, all convening during the summer of 1947, together with the Amsterdam assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1948, calling for Christian service and sacrifice in a spirit of brotherhood, underscored the urgency of Christian unity. Indeed, it may be said that unity was a chief topic of conversation among Christians throughout the world in the postwar era. Lutherans in America shared this concern, and recognizing that Christian unity involved Lutheran unity, set about finding ways and means to achieve it.¹

The year 1948 was decisive. At the synodical convention in Rock Island, the Kansas Conference presented a petition which set in motion a new impulse toward Lutheran unity. Calling attention to the fact that "the subject of Lutheran unity is at this time a matter of universal interest and concern within the Lutheran Church in America," the Conference memorialized the Synod

to declare itself in favor of the organic union of the constituent bodies of the National Lutheran Council. That the Synod initiate action asking other synodical bodies of the National Lutheran Council to approve organic union of the participating bodies.

That in the event favorable action shall be taken by any or all of the participating bodies, the Augustana Synod work with the other bodies in the formulation and preparation of such details as shall be necessary to effect and accomplish organic union.²

¹ For an expression of this concern from a layman's viewpoint see Algot J. Bowman, "Lutheran Unity from a Layman's Viewpoint," *The Lutheran Outlook*, May, 1949, pp. 141ff.

² *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1948, p. 406.

In his annual message to the Church, at the same convention, the president of the Synod, Dr. P. O. Bersell, also called attention to the urgency of Lutheran unity. In so doing he enunciated a viewpoint which may be said to have virtually become a principle for the Augustana Church in its strivings for Lutheran unity. In his statement Dr. Bersell declared,

New voices are being raised louder and more insistent than ever before for Lutheran unity in our land. Many leaders are saying that the day of action is here. Needless to say, the Augustana Synod responds favorably to this urge. . . . I will frankly state my personal opinion in the matter. I favor Lutheran Church Unity even to the extent of organic union at the very earliest moment provided that it is not a union of minor parts but represents as near a total merger as can be accomplished. I see no gain in an organic union of the bodies of the American Lutheran Conference for the reason that this will in my opinion create a new bloc of Lutheranism over against the two other blocs of almost equal size which would obviously hinder the ultimate union of these bodies. By the same token I would not be in favor of a merger with the other bodies of Scandinavian origin nor with the United Lutheran Church in America. *When the Augustana Synod gives up its life as a corporate body to merge with other Lutherans, may it be a part of the accomplishment of the merger of at least two thirds of the Lutherans in America* (Italics added). Then I would also see the ultimate possibility of a total union with the other third in God's good time.³

In response to these promptings from the president and from the Kansas Conference, the Synod declared itself

to be in favor of the organic union of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council together with any other Lutheran groups which may desire to join such a union with federation as an intermediate step, if necessary, and be it further resolved the Executive Council be requested to initiate action on behalf of the Church looking toward such union.⁴

That fall the American Lutheran Conference met in Detroit, Michigan, November 10-12, and adopted resolutions urging Lutheran unity and calling for an all-Lutheran free convocation to be conducted under the auspices of the National Lutheran Council for the purpose of exploring the grounds for action looking toward unity.⁵ At a post-

³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 406.

⁵ *Report of the American Lutheran Conference Convention, Detroit, Michigan, November 10-12, 1948*, p. 57f.

convention meeting of the presidents of the Churches belonging to the American Lutheran Conference, it was decided to petition the National Lutheran Council to call a "free conference of Lutherans" to discuss the question of unity, and that a meeting of National Lutheran Council representatives be held at Augustana headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota, January 4, 1949, and that on the following day, January 5, 1949, a meeting of the presidents belonging to the American Lutheran Conference be held in the headquarters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.⁶

The petitions for a series of "free conferences" were never presented to the National Lutheran Council, with the result that none were held under Council auspices. The scheduled meetings of January 4 and 5, 1949, however, were convened, and proved to be of decisive importance for the future of Lutheran unity in America. In response to an invitation from Augustana, issued by the Executive Council through the president of the Church, representatives of all bodies belonging to the National Lutheran Council, convened at Augustana headquarters, January 4, 1949. Since there were thirty-four men in attendance, this group was henceforth known as "The Committee of Thirty-four."⁷

Dr. Bersell, as the convener of the meeting, acted as presiding officer, and presented a proposal containing two alternatives: (1) the organic merger of the bodies associated with the National Lutheran Council, or (2) federation of the National Lutheran Council as an intermediate step looking to eventual complete merger. In the discussion which this proposition evoked, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry,

⁶ The American Lutheran Conference presidents were, P. O. Bersell, Augustana; T. O. Burntvedt, Lutheran Free Church; N. C. Carlsen, United Evangelical Lutheran Church (Danish); Emanuel Poppen, American Lutheran Church; and J. A. Aasgaard, Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norwegian). The meetings of the presidents, January 4 and 5, 1949, generated some tension and misunderstanding. Dr. Bersell seemed anxious that the meeting he was to call, involving representatives of the National Lutheran Council, have precedence over the meeting, Dr. N. C. Carlsen was to convene, involving representatives from the American Lutheran Conference only. The Norwegians (ELC) and Danes (UELC) were suspicious of Augustana's motives; they did not share Augustana's pro-U.L.C.A. sentiments. Carlsen agreed reluctantly that the meeting at Augustana headquarters should occur first. Interview with P. O. Bersell, May 21, 1962. See also E. C. Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

⁷ For the action initiating this meeting see report of the Executive Council, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1949, p. 56, and president's report, *Ibid.*, p. 40. The Augustana delegation at the meetings January 4 and 5, 1949, were: Dr. P. O. Bersell, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, Dr. Emil Swenson, Dr. E. E. Ryden, and the Minnesota Governor, Luther D. Youngdahl. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

president of the United Lutheran Church, argued forcefully for "a church with strong federative aspects," and declared,

We are willing to enter into organic union with any or all Lutheran groups, or to take any steps leading thereto.⁸

The delegations representing the Augustana Church and the American Lutheran Church echoed Dr. Fry's sentiments. Dr. H. F. Schuh, representing the American Lutheran Church pleaded for decisive action and asked,

What are we waiting for? We are already co-operating here at home and in all parts of the world. Is there some valid reason why we can't work together in foreign missions, home missions, education, pensions, and publications?

The Augustana delegates made it clear that their Church was prepared to go the whole way to organic union, provided a majority of the Lutheran groups would join such a move. Augustana insisted that if a federated church was to be formed, however, it must be soundly structured and given legislative authority, so that it could function as something more than a debating society. Dr. Oscar A. Benson contended that the chief obstacle to Lutheran unity was the "vested interests." "Our difficulties," he declared, "are largely psychological. We have our rational moments, but we find it difficult to reconcile our reason with our emotional attitudes." After a full day of discussion, Dr. Emmanuel Poppen of the American Lutheran Church offered the following resolution,

Resolved, that it is the sense of this group that closer organizational affiliation of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council is desirable and should be sought by all proper means.⁹

When this resolution was put to a vote by secret ballot, it was discovered that every representative of the eight bodies had voted in favor of the proposition. By a unanimous vote the assembly had approved Lutheran unity within the framework of the National Lutheran Council. It was to this goal that the Augustana Church was committed. The assembly thereupon adopted a resolution creating "a committee of fifteen" to prepare "a structural plan for the proposed organization and report in the fall to a plenary session of the "Com-

⁸ The meeting in full reported by Dr. Ryden in an editorial appearing in the *Lutheran Companion*, January 19, 1949.

⁹ *Lutheran Companion*, op. cit., p. 7f. This meeting is also reported in *The Lutheran Outlook*, February, 1949, p. 55f.

mittee of Thirty-four."¹⁰ What the Minutes of this historic meeting do not record, however, is the fact that though the vote on the unity proposal was unanimous, two of the delegations voiced objections to the proposition. President N. C. Carlsen of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church declared that his Church would hesitate in joining the proposed merger because of its suspicions of the laxity in doctrine and practice of the United Lutheran Church. Dr. T. F. Gullixson, speaking for the Evangelical Lutheran Church voiced similar objections, declaring that any contemplated Lutheran union must be firmly based on doctrinal agreements, and his Church was not satisfied that the United Lutheran Church was sufficiently orthodox in its conception of Scripture.¹¹

On April 26-27, 1949, the "Subcommittee of Fifteen," representing the "Committee of Thirty-four," met in Chicago and drew up a structural plan which proposed that (1) the parent committee request the Churches of the National Lutheran Council to take action on organic union, and (2) pending consummation of the same, a National Lutheran Federation be established. When the "Committee of Thirty-four" met in Chicago, September 27, 1949, the report of the subcommittee "was adopted in part and the balance . . . was referred . . . for further consideration." There was not yet sufficient unanimity in the "Committee of Thirty-four" to actualize merger negotiations within the framework of the National Lutheran Council.¹²

While the "Committee of Thirty-four" had been busily engaged making plans for achieving unity within the framework of the National Lutheran Council, however, another development was taking place. Quiet talks had been going on behind the scenes for some time between the Norwegians of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Danes of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, seeking ways and means of establishing a smaller union of Lutherans than that of the National Lutheran Council. This effort was in harmony with a resolution adopted by the representatives of the American Lutheran Conference at their meeting, January 5, 1949, under the chairmanship of Dr. N. C. Carlsen, which affirmed the principle that while every effort ought to be made to achieve as broad a union of Lutherans

¹⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1950, p. 396f.

¹¹ Professor Joseph Sittler of the Lutheran Seminary in Maywood had recently published a book, *The Doctrine of the Word* (Philadelphia, Muhlenberg Press, 1948), which was critical of the theory of verbal inspiration. See E. C. Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

¹² "Communication from the Lutheran Unity Committees," *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1959, pp. 369ff.

as possible, *there ought to be no objection to lesser approaches to unity within the American Lutheran Conference*.¹³ These quiet negotiations resulted in a meeting, September 16, 1949, just eleven days prior to the meeting of the "Committee of Thirty-four," attended by representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the American Lutheran Church, at which Dr. T. F. Gullixson presented a resolution proposing a merger of the three bodies.¹⁴ As a consequence of this action, representatives from each of the three Churches, officially constituted as the *Joint Committee on Union*, assembled in Chicago, November 25, 1949, and adopted a comprehensive statement known as the *Resolutions of the Joint Committee on Union*, which proposed a union of the American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church "as a step in the unfolding unification of the Lutheran Churches in America," on the basis of their agreement concerning the "Minneapolis Theses with the eight paragraphs of the Chicago Theses of 1919."¹⁵ Although Dr. Carlsen was eager to lead his Synod into a merger with the much larger aggressive Evangelical Lutheran Church, his Danish colleagues feared that their small Church would be completely overwhelmed by the Norwegians. They asked, therefore, that in the pending merger negotiations two more bodies of the American Lutheran Conference be invited to enter the negotiations.¹⁶ Accordingly, invitations from the Joint Committee on Union were extended to the Lutheran Free Church and the Augustana Synod.¹⁷

At its convention in Washington, D.C., June, 1950, the Augustana Church instructed the Executive Council to "name a committee on Lutheran unity to make a thorough study of the whole problem of unity in the light of the decisions which will be reached by the various bodies this year." In constituting the new Augustana Committee on Lutheran Unity, the Executive Council chose the following: Dr. P. O. Bersell, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, Dr. D. Verner Swanson, Dr. E. E. Ryden, Dr. Karl E. Mattson, Dr. Edgar Carlson, Mr. H. A. Smith, Mr. Adolph Hanson, and Dr. Emory Lindquist, with Dr. Reuben K.

¹³ E. C. Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

¹⁵ Report of the Committee on Lutheran Unity," *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1951, p. 348f.

¹⁶ E. C. Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

¹⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1951, p. 350.

Youngdahl, Dr. T. A. Gustafson, and Dr. Holger Kilander as alternates.¹⁸

On April 17, 1951, the Augustana Committee on Lutheran Unity met in Chicago, Illinois, with the Joint Committee on Union. On the day previous to this assembly, the Augustana Committee had met by itself and reviewed the entire course of events regarding unity negotiations. At that meeting, the chairman, Dr. Bersell, reiterated the principle he had enunciated on many previous occasions, namely, that "when the Augustana Synod gives up its corporate life to merge with other Lutherans, it shall be as a part of a 'majority merger,' which shall include as large a segment of the Lutheran Church in America as possible. The Augustana Church is not interested in the creation of any more Lutheran power blocs." To this principle the Augustana delegation gave unanimous approval.¹⁹ The next day when the Augustana Committee met with the Joint Committee on Union, the Augustana delegation was requested to answer two questions:

1. Are you willing to recommend to your church body the Plan drawn up by the Joint Committee on Union and approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church?

2. If so, in what way can you participate in the preliminary study, conferences and committee work before your church convention assemblies?²⁰

At this point the Augustana delegation withdrew for a caucus, and after careful consideration of the questions, prepared and submitted to the Joint Committee the following statement:

The Augustana Committee has agreed to the following procedure:

1. To seek a further mandate from our Church in regard to continuing the study and exploration of the proposed merger in conformity with the pattern proposed by the Joint Committee on Union.

2. To propose to our Church at its 1951 synod that it place on the agenda of the 1952 synod the question of the possibility and advisability of our participation as a Church in the proposed merger of the American Conference bodies.

3. To accept consultative relationship with the Joint Committee until our Church has given definite direction in the matter.²¹

¹⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1951, p. 348. The number nine was agreed upon because this was the number elected to similar committees by the other church bodies.

¹⁹ Interview with Dr. P. O. Bersell, May 21, 1962.

²⁰ "Report of the Committee on Lutheran Unity," *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1951, p. 350.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 351.

The proposals of the Augustana Committee were accepted and approved by the Joint Committee on Union, and six members of the Augustana delegation were given committee assignments.²² The actions by the Augustana Committee were endorsed by the Synod at its convention in 1951, at which time the Synod declared:

We reiterate our desire for unity which would include all bodies of the National Lutheran Council, and instruct our Committee on Lutheran Unity, in addition to the discussions on the American Lutheran Conference level, to hold discussions with other bodies of the National Lutheran Council, and include results of such discussions in its report to the Church next year.²³

In accordance with these instructions the Committee on Lutheran Unity held a series of meetings prior to and in preparation for the synodical convention in 1952. On February 13, 1952, the Committee met with the Joint Committee on Union in Chicago. At this assembly the Joint Committee submitted its "United Testimony on Faith and Life," and asked the Augustana delegation to endorse it. This notable document was actually an interpretation of Lutheran faith and practice from the viewpoint of "exclusive confessionalism." It affirmed the kind of theology and usage advocated in the "Chicago Theses" of 1919, promulgated by the late Dr. Stub, and elaborated in the "Minneapolis Theses" of 1925. Strange to say, the Augustana Committee on Lutheran Unity gave the document their "unanimous approval."²⁴

On March 6, 1952, the Augustana Committee on Lutheran Unity conducted a series of successive consultations with representatives of Churches not included in the contemplated American Lutheran Conference merger. In each of the three sessions, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, president of the Augustana Church, presided and explained to the visitors the prospects, hopes, and alternatives as seen from the viewpoint of Augustana. The guests were asked to express their views on all phases of the current negotiations. The first session was with representatives of the Suomi Synod, who expressed a preference for unity which would include the entire National Lutheran Council. The Suomi delegation also felt that until such larger negotiations could be achieved the Augustana Church could render the cause of Lutheran unity its

²² *Ibid.*, p. 351.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 351.

²⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 356f. The complete text of the "United Testimony of Faith and Life" is given in the *Synodical Minutes*, 1952, pp. 359-371, together with the names of the Augustana committee members who subscribed to it. The full text of the "Minneapolis Theses" is given, *Ibid.*, pp. 371-375.

greatest service by foregoing immediate merger and retaining its corporate identity. The second session was held with representatives of the Danish American Evangelical Lutheran Church. Dr. Alfred Jensen, chairman of the Danish delegation, reminded the assembly that his Church had voted in 1950 to enter into unity negotiations with all the bodies of the National Lutheran Council, and had approved the plan of federation as an intermediate step. These decisions, said Dr. Jensen, still reflected the sentiments of his Church. The Danes also stated it as their conviction that the Augustana Church could perform its greatest service to the cause of Lutheran unity by retaining its corporate identity until all the Churches of the National Lutheran Council could form one Church. The third consultative session was held with the Special Committee on Relations with American Lutheran Church Bodies of the United Lutheran Church in America. Dr. Franklin Clark Fry acted as the chief spokesman for his delegation, and stated that the United Lutheran Church wanted it plainly understood that it in no way wished to hinder or obstruct any negotiations Augustana might wish to carry on with members of the American Lutheran Conference. This was strictly Augustana's own affair. But Dr. Fry was equally emphatic in expressing the deep regret of the members of the United Lutheran Church that they were not included, but entirely ignored, in the conversations carried on by the American Lutheran Conference. The United Lutheran Church, said Dr. Fry, would be willing to scrap its present organization and constitution and form an altogether new Church with Augustana or any other Lutheran group willing to enter such a merger.²⁵

The Augustana Committee on Lutheran Unity met again in Chicago, April 17, 1952, and on the basis of the information elicited in the consultative sessions, formulated the following statement for submission to the Synod at its forthcoming annual convention:

On the basis of our consultative participation in the merger negotiations now being carried on by the constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference and our discussions with the United Lutheran Church in America, the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Suomi Synod, and

In view of the fact that these negotiations and discussions reveal no valid barrier to complete organizational union of the constituent bodies of the National Lutheran Council, and

²⁵ These consultative sessions are recorded in the annual report of the Committee on Lutheran Unity, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 357.

In compliance with the instructions given by the Augustana Lutheran Church in 1950 and 1951, The Committee on Lutheran Unity submits the following recommendations:

1. We reaffirm our position "that our Church has always been genuinely interested in every move that would promote true unity in the Lutheran household of faith" and "that we are primarily interested at the present time in the consummation of a closer organizational affiliation of all the bodies participating in the National Lutheran Council."

2. We express the desire to maintain our friendly relations with the bodies of the American Lutheran Conference, and with the other Lutheran general bodies in America.

3. We authorize the Executive Council of the Church to select a Committee on Lutheran Unity, consisting of nine regular members and alternates as deemed necessary.

4. We instruct this Committee as follows:

a. To represent our Church in Lutheran Unity discussions.

b. To request the other general bodies in the American Lutheran Conference and the Joint Union Committee to invite the other general bodies of the National Lutheran Council to participate in future discussions of Lutheran unity.

c. To continue participation in any Lutheran unity discussions which

1) Include all general bodies of the National Lutheran Council desiring to participate.

2) Include the whole subject of ecumenical relations.

d. To initiate or help initiate new unity discussions which will be open to all general bodies of the National Lutheran Council desiring to participate, in the event the Joint Union Committee cannot continue negotiations as indicated above.²⁶

The ninety-third annual convention of the Augustana Lutheran Church was held at the First Lutheran Church, Des Moines, Iowa, June 10-15, 1952. The entire Augustana Synod had been alerted through its church press that the main issue to be decided at Des Moines was Lutheran Unity.²⁷ It was essential that the delegates who were to vote on the issue should understand that there were a number of important questions involved in the issue of Lutheran unity. There was the theological question: Does the "United Testimony on Faith and Life," based as it is upon the "Chicago Theses" and the "Minneapolis Theses," and promulgated by the Joint Commission on Unity of the American Lutheran Conference, truly express the mind and spirit of the Augus-

²⁶ Addendum to Report of Committee on Lutheran Unity, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 358.

²⁷ See *Lutheran Companion*, April 2. 9; May 21, 1952.

tana Church? There was the ecumenical question: Is the "exclusive confessionalism" affirmed by the proposed American Lutheran Conference merger compatible with the ecumenical spirit and practice of the Augustana Church? Augustana was one of the first Lutheran bodies in America to establish membership in the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Would these ecumenical relationships be jeopardized in a merger with the American Lutheran Conference group? There was the historical question: What are Augustana's historical ties? Which relationships and associations in the past seem to have created a natural spirit of kinship between Augustana and its Lutheran neighbors in America? There were the practical questions: In what relationship will the Augustana Church feel most at home? Where can it best and most effectively serve the Lord of the Church? Where can it realize its ideal of Lutheran unity in greatest measure? In helping the Augustana people find answers to such questions, a series of two lengthy articles, entitled, "Lutheran Unity Is Desirable," by Dr. S. E. Engstrom, appearing in the *Lutheran Companion*, were particularly pointed and illuminating. Dr. Engstrom could not be accused of being a foe of the American Lutheran Conference, for he had been active in its affairs, and at its biennial convention, November 12-13, 1952, in Minneapolis, the American Lutheran Conference elected him as its president.²⁸ Nevertheless, Dr. Engstrom pleaded with the Augustana Church to turn away from union with the American Lutheran Conference group and work for the larger merger of all churches affiliated with the National Lutheran Council. And if that were found to be impossible, said Dr. Engstrom, the Augustana Church should then begin negotiations with the United Lutheran Church in America, looking toward merger with that body. Engstrom declared that the historical ties and the natural affinities of faith and practice of the Augustana Church were not exclusive but ecumenical, and therefore were inclined in the direction of the United Lutheran Church rather than toward the American Lutheran Conference. In any merger with the American Lutheran Conference group, warned Engstrom, Augustana could hardly expect to retain its ecumenical relationships with the World Council of Churches or the National Council of Churches, since the American Lutheran Conference merger was not sympathetic to the ecumenical movement. The real work of Lutheranism in America,

²⁸ *American Lutheran Conference Convention Report*, Eleventh Biennial Convention, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 12-13, 1952, p. 13.

said Dr. Engstrom, had been done in the past not by the debating society known as the American Lutheran Conference, but by the National Lutheran Council. Within the broad fellowship of the National Lutheran Council real Lutheran unity for the future must be found.²⁹

Equally persuasive voices were raised on the other side of the issue. No one in the Augustana Church spoke more effectively on behalf of the American Lutheran Conference merger than did Dr. E. E. Ryden, the editor of the *Lutheran Companion*. Commenting favorably upon the proposals set forth by the Joint Union Committee, including the "United Testimony on Faith and Life," Dr. Ryden declared:

The Lutheran Church bodies making up the American Lutheran Conference have now walked and worked together for a period of more than twenty years. They have learned to know one another both as to doctrine and as to manner of life . . . Through closer acquaintance and deepening fellowship they have found that the common roots of their faith in the Holy Scriptures and in the Lutheran Confessions have given them a common life in communion with the One Lord and Savior. Their loyalty to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, their Lutheran heritage, and the need of the world seem to call for further exploration of the possibilities of closer fellowship, greater understanding, and closer organizational co-operation or union.³⁰

Thus, it may be said that the delegates who assembled in Des Moines were aware of the issues, and realized that the action taken at the convention would likely have far-reaching consequences.

At the Des Moines convention, the subject of Lutheran unity was scheduled for debate on Friday afternoon, June 13. Just a few days previous to this hour, the Evangelical Lutheran Church at its biennial convention in Minneapolis had gone on record favoring a five-way merger of the bodies associated with the American Lutheran Conference, including Augustana. There were a number of

²⁹ See *Lutheran Companion*, April 2, 9, 1952.

³⁰ Editorial, the *Lutheran Companion*, February 27, 1952. Dr. Ryden editorialized again in favor of the American Lutheran Conference merger in the issue of March 26, 1952, declaring that "It should be a matter of real thanksgiving . . . that there are no differences in the doctrinal positions held by the five bodies." For further evidence of Augustana sentiment in favor of the American Lutheran Conference merger see Petition from St. John's Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Illinois, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 376. Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen has also stated "There were those who felt that Augustana made a mistake in separating itself from the merger negotiations which resulted in the American Lutheran Church. There were those who had questions about the advisability of merging with the U. L. C. A." Letter, May 4, 1962.

Augustana people in the crowded sanctuary of First Church, Des Moines, that Friday afternoon who wanted Augustana to cast a similar vote and join the Norwegians in the formation of a new Lutheran Church of some 2,200,000 baptized members. There were other delegates at the convention who were equally convinced that to enter a merger with the group representing the American Lutheran Conference would be a mistake, and hoped to see the National Lutheran Council as the broader framework of merger negotiations. There were also those who were loath to see Augustana enter any kind of merger. An eyewitness account of the proceedings that day states that "a feeling of suppressed excitement pervaded the church assembly as the hour approached for the discussion of Lutheran unity. Delegates and visitors leaned forward in their pews to listen to every word that was spoken."³¹ The Augustana Committee on Lutheran unity presented the recommendations which had been formulated at the Chicago meeting in April. These resolutions bore the endorsement of the Executive Council of the Church, which also added its approval of the "United Testimony on Faith and Life." Of the many who addressed the Des Moines convention on various phases of the merger question, none spoke more positively or perceptively to the real issues at hand than did Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, president of Augustana College. Objecting to the "United Testimony on Faith and Life" as a basis for negotiating Lutheran unity, Bergendoff declared,

The doctrinal position of our Augustana Church is clearly stated in our constitution. It is a fallacy of unity negotiations that we have to prove that we *are* Lutherans. We are not *becoming* Lutherans; we *are* Lutherans. We are never going to get anywhere in any unity negotiations if we must rewrite the confessional books of the Lutheran Church. What we must try to do is to get Lutherans to recognize Lutherans. Unity is not made; it is acknowledged.³²

Furthermore, said Bergendoff, the "United Testimony on Faith and Life" does not reach the level—either in content or form—that might be expected of such a statement. It presents as a basis for union a theology which stresses the doctrine of sanctification rather than justification, and therefore misses the mark of the real genius of Lutheran theology. This, Bergendoff claimed, was hardly the kind of document which ought to be seriously proposed as a substitute for the historic Augsburg Confession as a negotiating basis of Lutheran

³¹ E. E. Ryden, "A Hopeful Church Faces World Task," *Lutheran Companion*, July 16, 1952, pp. 7ff.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

unity.³³ He also voiced the sentiments of the majority of his hearers regarding the exclusiveness of the American Lutheran Conference merger when he declared,

To be brutally frank, the United Lutheran Church is left out purposely. How can we have union with one of the greatest Lutheran bodies in our country ignored? I believe in a unity that will bring together more Lutherans. There is no vision or courage or daring in the five-way proposal, and we believe so strongly in the union of the entire Lutheran Church that we would prefer to wait longer for the real thing than to accept something less.³⁴

These sentiments of the speaker were fortified and underscored by communications from the Columbia, Red River Valley and New England Conferences, memorializing the Synod not to accept an exclusive merger, but to continue striving for Lutheran unity which would include the entire National Lutheran Council, or at least, the United Lutheran Church in America.³⁵ The prevailing sentiment of the convention may be judged by the fact that, according to the testimony of an interested visitor, during the ninety minutes of discussion on Lutheran merger which occurred on Friday afternoon, June 13, eleven speakers addressed the convention, and "nine of these men gave unqualified endorsement to the basal proposition that the Augustana Lutheran Church's thirst for unity will not be satisfied by a union that is limited to the Churches in the American Lutheran Conference."³⁶

That the Synod was not quite as bold as some of its leaders is attested by the fact that when the unity discussion resumed on Saturday morning, June 14, the delegation, which on Friday had refused to approve the "United Testimony on Faith and Life" was warned by a spokesman for the American Lutheran Conference merger that this refusal to adopt said statement might be misinterpreted in some Lutheran circles. As a result the convention adopted the following pale substitute:

While the Augustana Lutheran Church traditionally has taken the position that adherence to the historic Confessions of the Lutheran Church is sufficient for Lutheran unity and that no addi-

³³ See Edward W. Schramm, "Augustana Wants Total Lutheran Unity," in *The Lutheran Standard*, reprinted in *Ibid.*, p. 15f.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 375.

³⁶ The comment was written by Dr. Edward W. Schramm, member of the American Lutheran Church and editor of *The Lutheran Standard*, who together with Dr. O. G. Malmin, editor of the *Lutheran Herald*, official weekly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, were interested visitors at the Des Moines convention. See *Lutheran Companion*, July 16, 1952, p. 15.

tional doctrinal statements are needed, we nevertheless declare ourselves to be in substantial agreement with the statement entitled, "United Testimony on Faith and Life." We suggest, however, that in the event this document is considered in broader unity discussions, it should be further studied and refined.³⁷

When the discussions on Lutheran unity were finally concluded, the Synod passed the following resolutions:

1. We reaffirm our position "that our Church has always been genuinely interested in every move that would promote true unity in the Lutheran household of faith."

Therefore, it is our fervent hope and prayer that the present divisions in our Lutheran Church may by the grace of God be overcome, and that a closer organizational affiliation of all general Lutheran bodies in America may soon be effected.

2. We express our desire to maintain friendly relations with the bodies of the American Lutheran Conference, and with all other Lutheran general bodies in America.

3. We authorize the Executive Council of the Church to select a committee on Lutheran unity, consisting of nine regular members and alternates as deemed necessary to represent our Church in Lutheran unity discussions.

4. *The Augustana Lutheran Church expresses itself as being unwilling to continue in unity discussions which are not open to all Lutheran general bodies and which do not include the consideration of the subject of ecumenical relations.* (Italics added).

5. We instruct our Commission on Lutheran Unity to request the other general bodies in American Lutheran Conference and the Joint Union Committee to invite all other Lutheran general bodies to participate in further negotiations to achieve Lutheran unity and to include in such discussion the subject of ecumenical relations.³⁸

After this action had been taken, one commentator summarized the meaning of what had taken place in the terse comment that,

What all this amounts to is that the Augustana Lutheran Church is definitely and emphatically interested in Lutheran union—on the broadest possible base—but is definitely not interested in a merger that is limited to the five Churches in the American Lutheran Conference.³⁹

By its action at Des Moines, the Augustana Church put the matter of continued negotiations squarely up to the American Lutheran Con-

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9. This substitute is a prime example of ecclesiastical equivocation which *does* and *does not* take a definite position on a clear cut issue.

³⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1952, p. 374f.

³⁹ Edward W. Schramm, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

ference group. Now it was Augustana's turn to ask the questions, and the two basic questions to which the Joint Committee on Union must reply were:

1. Are you willing to broaden the negotiations for merger to include all other Lutheran general bodies affiliated with the National Lutheran Council?
2. Are you willing to include in merger discussions the whole subject of ecumenical relations?

The answers to these two questions would determine the direction Augustana would take in future negotiations regarding Lutheran unity. In compliance with synodical instructions, the Executive Council chose a new Committee on Lutheran Unity to represent Augustana on all subsequent unity negotiations.⁴⁰

On November 10, 1952, a meeting was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, which brought together the "Committee of Forty-five," consisting of nine men from each of the following churches, Augustana Lutheran Church, American Lutheran Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Free Church. The presidents of the five Churches reported the action their respective Churches had taken on the subject of unity. On behalf of the Augustana Church, Dr. Oscar A. Benson, president of the Synod and chairman of the Augustana delegation, read the resolutions which had been adopted at Des Moines, and which involved the two basic questions, which Augustana was asking. Following the presidents' reports, the delegations representing Augustana and the Lutheran Free Church were excused for a recess period while the "Committee of Twenty-seven," now functioning for the Joint Committee on Union, took action regarding the status of the Augustana and Free Church committees.⁴¹

When the "Committee of Forty-five" reconvened, the "Committee of Twenty-seven" presented the following resolutions which constituted their reply to the questions Augustana had asked,

Whereas The Augustana Lutheran Church has requested the Joint Union Committee "to invite all other Lutheran General

⁴⁰ The members were: Dr. Oscar A. Benson, chairman; Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, vice-chairman, Dr. Emory Lindquist, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Dr. Edgar M. Carlson, Dr. S. E. Engstrom, Dr. Karl E. Mattson, Dr. D. Verner Swanson, and Mr. Adolph Hanson, with Mr. C. Elmer Anderson, Mr. H. F. Kilander, Dr. Thorsten Gustafson and Dr. Reuben Youngdahl as alternates. *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1953, p. 340.

⁴¹ Report of Committee on Lutheran Unity, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1953, p. 340f.

Bodies to participate in further negotiations to achieve Lutheran unity, and to include in such discussions the subject of Ecumenical relations," and

Whereas the Augustana Lutheran Church in convention assembled has expressed itself as "being unwilling to continue in unity discussions which are not open to all Lutheran General Bodies," and

Whereas the Committee of Nine of the three bodies originally negotiating merger are without authority from their respective church bodies to include all other Lutheran bodies in said negotiations,

Be It Resolved that the Committee of Twenty-seven express its deep regret over the situation which has developed by the decisions of the Augustana Lutheran Church

Be It Further Resolved that the Committee of Twenty-seven reiterate its cordial invitation to the Augustana Lutheran Church to participate in the present plans toward a merger of all the American Lutheran Conference Churches.

Be It Further Resolved that the Committee of Twenty-seven give assurance that its agenda will continue to be open for all pertinent discussions in preparation for the proposed merger including the subject of ecumenical relations.⁴²

Thereupon Dr. Benson rose and addressed the assembly, making it clear that the reply of the Committee of Twenty-seven was not satisfactory to Augustana. He said,

This action marks something of a milestone in the history of the Lutheran Church in America. Whether wise or otherwise, only time will tell.

We deeply appreciate the forthrightness of your statement and think we understand its implications. We appreciate the very fine fellowship we have had in the Committee of Forty-five, and the generous invitation to come into the merger negotiations. Bound as we are by the decisions of our Church, we really have only one door through which we go, and we shall do that as graciously as we can.

I assure you that we shall not lose one iota of our interest in a strong united Lutheran Church in America and for a strong Evangelical Protestant Church which shall not be vitiated by the spirit of modernism, as we want to make our contributions to both. It is of the utmost importance that the Lutheran Church make its influence felt to this end.

While we may no longer be able to negotiate with you, we shall still cherish the same cordial feeling toward you and shall co-operate with you in every way. We are glad that instead of

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 341f.

temporizing you have stated your position so very clearly and succinctly . . .

We thank you very much for these resolutions, for they have helped to clear the atmosphere . . .

That is our valedictory at the moment. I suggest we be permitted to be excused so that you may go on with the work that is so important, and which, I pray God, may mean much for the days that lie ahead.⁴³

At this point Dr. Benson was asked about the possibility of having Augustana continue in the five-way merger negotiations, to which he replied,

We are extremely grateful for the gracious invitation to continue, even though you must have realized that under the restrictions placed upon us by our Church we cannot accept the invitation. If and when our Church shall decide differently, we shall be at the service of the Church. We shall report to the Church what you have said.⁴⁴

The Augustana delegation also pointed out that the reply which the Committee of Twenty-seven had given to the question of ecumenical relations was unsatisfactory. In the light of the answers which had been given to the two basic questions raised by Augustana, it was obvious, said the Augustana committee, that Augustana could no longer continue as a part of the "Committee of Forty-five," and that all negotiations with the American Lutheran Conference would now terminate. In reporting this meeting to the Augustana public, the editor of the *Lutheran Companion* declared.

It was a solemn moment, and every one present sensed its significance as the Augustana representatives arose and walked quietly from the conference chamber while the other committee members sat in silence. A chapter in Lutheran unity strivings in America had come to a close.⁴⁵

The termination of merger negotiations between Augustana and the Joint Committee on Union had important indirect consequences for the American Lutheran Conference. For a number of years the National Lutheran Council had been steadily increasing the orbit of its responsibilities and activities, absorbing many of the functions which

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 342.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

⁴⁵ Editorial, *Lutheran Companion*, November 26, 1952. The consultations were so brief and concluded so quickly that Dr. P. O. Bersell, who was delayed enroute to the meeting, is said to have arrived at the council chambers just in time to join his Augustana colleagues in their historic withdrawal.

the American Lutheran Conference had assumed or intended to assume.⁴⁶ From approximately 1950 it was evident to most of the constituent bodies of the Conference that it had fulfilled its major purposes, and that the time would soon come for the dissolution of the American Lutheran Conference. As long, however, as the Conference constituted an important framework within which unity negotiations were taking place, the continued existence of the Conference was justified. But when the negotiations among the churches represented in the Joint Committee on Union had progressed so far as to render the framework of the Conference no longer essential, and the negotiations between Augustana and the Joint Commission on Union were terminated, a strong bond holding the Conference together was broken.⁴⁷ After having given the matter careful consideration during the biennium of 1952-1954, the executive committee, representing all of the constituent bodies of the Conference voted unanimously to dissolve the American Lutheran Conference. Accordingly, the final convention of the Conference was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 10, 1954, with Dr. S. E. Engstrom presiding. After reviewing the accomplishments of the association during its history of twenty-four years, receiving the reports of the various committees and commissions, and disposing of the Conference assets, the delegation adopted a motion to dissolve, whereupon Dr. Engstrom declared the American Lutheran Conference dissolved. Immediately following the conclusion of the Conference convention, a two-day "free Lutheran conference" was held, November 11-12, 1954, for the purpose and in the hope that further impulses toward Lutheran unity might be stimulated. Though the two-day session afforded pleasant fellowship and interesting exchange of ideas, no new doors were opened to further or broaden Lutheran unity.⁴⁸ Henceforth, the Augustana Church went its own way in its striving for Lutheran unity, while the Joint Committee on Unity, the Committee of Twenty-seven as it was sometimes called, took another pathway toward Lutheran unity.

Under the synodical administration of Dr. Oscar A. Benson, the structure of unity activities of the Augustana Church was reorganized

⁴⁶ See Report of President, *Minutes, American Lutheran Conference Concluding Biennial Convention*, Minneapolis, Minn., November 10, 1954.

⁴⁷ Although it is undoubtedly true, as Dr. Engstrom declared in his first president's report, that the dissolution of the American Lutheran Conference was not caused by the termination of merger negotiations, this development unquestionably served to precipitate action for dissolution.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17. See also *Lutheran Companion*, December 1, 1954, p. 7.

and a new program of unity negotiations was launched.⁴⁹ The *Committee on Lutheran Unity* became the *Commission on Ecumenical Relations*, with a set of "Rules of Procedure" and definite functions and responsibilities as part of its portfolio.⁵⁰ There were four specific responsibilities given to the Commission on Ecumenical Relations: (1) To report annually to the Church all ecumenical developments and make recommendations for church action, (2) To serve as a study group in the area of ecumenical relations, (3) To consider problems connected with church representation in connection with ecumenical relations and advise the Church in such matters, (4) To give the Church guidance in the area of ecumenical relations.

The Commission on Ecumenical Relations sought a new approach to the whole question of Lutheran unity. At a meeting of the commission, November 15, 1954, after long and serious deliberation and careful study of the mandates given by the Church, the following motion was adopted,

That the Commission on Ecumenical Relations of the Augustana Lutheran Church invite the various Lutheran bodies, through their appropriate committees, to confer with it on the question of what constitutes essential conditions of Lutheran unity in America. It is desired especially to consider: Conditions necessary for pulpit and altar fellowship; and the relationship of pulpit and altar fellowship to organizational unity.⁵¹

From this invitation there eventuated a series of discussions which were held in Chicago, March 28, 1955, with delegates from three different Lutheran groups, including the Missouri Synod, the United Lutheran Church in America, and the Joint Union Committee, sometimes known as The Committee of Twenty-seven.⁵² The discussions with the Missouri delegation and the Joint Union Committee were cordial and pleasant, but elicited negative replies to the question, "Does your church body have any plan for union embracing all American Lutherans if all were agreeable to closer ties?"⁵³ During

⁴⁹ Dr. Oscar A. Benson was elected to succeed Dr. P. O. Bersell, as president of the Augustana Church, at the synodical convention in 1951.

⁵⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1954, p. 433f.

⁵¹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1955, p. 440.

⁵² *Minutes of the Meeting of the Commission on Ecumenical Relations* held on Monday, March 28, Union League Club, Chicago, Illinois. See also the *Lutheran Companion*, April 13, 1955, pp. 6-10.

⁵³ See report of this meeting, the *Lutheran Companion*, *op. cit.*, p. 9. The Augustana Commission had formulated a list of seven questions which were used as the basis for the discussion with the various Lutheran bodies. They were: 1. With what Lutheran bodies does your body have pulpit and

the discussion with the delegation from the United Lutheran Church, however, the president of that body, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, requested permission to read a statement. This statement proved to be the key which unlocked the door to a new chapter in Lutheran unity negotiations. Dr. Fry began by reviewing the links which had bound Augustana and the United Lutheran Church together. He went on to point out that the "agreements of our churches are broad and deep. In all essentials we are already one." He listed five essential points of consensus between the two bodies, (1) subscription *ex anima* to the historic Lutheran Confessions, (2) no further definitions of doctrine, and addition to the historic confessions, are demanded by either Church for Lutheran unity, (3) both Churches affirm an ecumenical rather than an exclusive Lutheranism, (4) both Churches maintain and encourage broad ecumenical relationships, (5) both Churches practice a large degree of local and regional autonomy. On the basis of this acknowledged unity, Dr. Fry concluded his statement with the following paragraph,

In behalf of the United Lutheran Church in America which has declared "its desire to merge with any or all" Lutherans in America, and has authorized this commission "to participate in drafting a constitution and in devising such organizational procedures as may seem wise in effecting union," we respectfully invite the Augustana Lutheran Church to appoint a commission of equal members to meet with us for that purpose and to join with us in issuing invitations to all other Lutheran bodies to appoint like commissions. May the blessing of God our Savior rest upon this endeavor to reveal openly the unity which we have already received as His precious gift.

To strengthen his case, Dr. Fry presented a second document which

altar fellowship? 2. Are you now engaged in conversations with any Lutheran groups looking toward such fellowship? 3. What prevents such fellowship between your body and those with whom no such fellowship exists? 4. Would you agree that altar and pulpit fellowship is important in itself apart from relationships of organization? 5. Does your body have any plan of union embracing all American Lutherans if all were agreeable to closer ties? 6. Do you feel that your doctrine of the Church differs on essential points from the doctrines held by other American Lutheran bodies? 7. Recalling the tedious, complicated but eventually successful negotiations between 1555 and 1580, which produced the Book of Concord, would your body be willing to appoint representatives to join with all other Lutheran bodies willing to appoint such representatives to study the problem of Lutheran relationships in America? This commission would report its findings to each body in matters of theology and church polity. See *Minutes, Commission on Ecumenical Relations, March 28, 1955.*

was in the form of an exhibit of related documents of the two Churches showing the close similarity of faith and practice of the two.⁵⁴

This was a significant moment. For seven years the Augustana Church had pursued an aggressive course looking toward the goal of a Lutheran consolidation of the largest possible dimensions. Considerable time and effort had been given to the accomplishment of such a goal by seeking a rapprochement between the contending wings in the National Lutheran Council. Such efforts, however, had proven abortive. But now the United Lutheran Church was grasping the outstretched hand of Augustana and suggesting that without further delay the two principal advocates of ecumenical confessionalism in America join forces to initiate new unity negotiations. That the invitation of the United Lutheran Church was sincerely welcomed by the Augustana Synod is evidenced by the fact that before the synodical convention assembled in St. Paul, June, 1955, no less than ten of the thirteen conferences of the Synod had sent in petitions memorializing the Augustana Church to accept the invitation of the United Lutheran Church and thus set in motion a new impulse in America for Lutheran union. With this overwhelming sentiment to encourage decisive synodical action, the Church in convention assembled responded to the United Lutheran overture by adopting the following resolutions:

Whereas the Special Committee on relations to American Lutheran Church bodies of the United Lutheran Church in America has presented a proposal for Lutheran merger discussions, and

Whereas this proposal includes the basic principles enunciated by our Church at the Synod held in 1950, 1952 and 1954,

Therefore be it resolved that

a. The Church accept the proposal of the United Lutheran Church in America to join with it in extending invitations to all Lutheran Church bodies to participate in merger discussions looking toward organic union and pray earnestly that this invitation may receive general acceptance.

b. The Church authorize the Commission on Ecumenical Relations to enter into conversations looking toward organic union with the United Lutheran Church in America, and any other Lutheran Church bodies accepting the invitation extended.

c. Should any Lutheran Church body be unable at present to participate in such negotiations, the Commission on Ecumenical Relations be urged to seek ways and means of keeping open the channels of communication for continuing conversations with

⁵⁴ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1955, p. 440f. See also the *Lutheran Companion*, April 13, 1955.

that body in the hope that ultimately total Lutheran unity might be achieved.⁵⁵

Having accepted the invitation to join the United Lutheran Church in a new endeavor on behalf of Lutheran unity, the Synod reorganized the Commission on Ecumenical Relations, increasing its size from nine to thirteen members with the president, vice-president and secretary of the Church as *ex officio* members, and the remaining ten members composed of four laymen and six pastors.⁵⁶ This Commission met with a similar group from the United Lutheran Church at the Union League Club in Chicago, December 16, 1955, and issued the following joint invitation to fourteen Lutheran Church bodies.⁵⁷

In gratitude to God for the unity in the gospel that He has given to the Lutherans in America, and in the conviction that this unity ought now manifest itself in the organic union of our separate Church bodies, The United Lutheran Church in America, and The Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church respectfully invite your honorable Church body to designate duly authorized representatives to meet with the commissioners of our two churches, and with similarly empowered representatives of other Lutheran Church bodies, to consider such organic union as will give real evidence of our unity in the faith, and to proceed to draft a constitution and devise organizational procedures . . . to effect union.

For the United Lutheran Church in America,
Franklin Clark Fry, President

For the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church,
Oscar A. Benson, President⁵⁸

When this invitation was made public it received a mixed response. A number of bodies chose to ignore it, others gave negative response, but the Churches represented in the Joint Committee on Union greeted the invitation from Augustana and the United Lutheran Church with misgivings and some resentment. There were those among them who interpreted the invitation as a deliberate effort to "meddle" in the current merger negotiations of the Joint Committee on Union in the hope of breaking open the American Lutheran Conference merger

⁵⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1955, p. 445f.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 446.

⁵⁷ The invitation was sent to: American Ev. Lutheran Church, American Lutheran Church, Church of the Lutheran Brethren, Eilsen Synod, Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church, Joint Synod of Wisconsin, National Ev. Lutheran Church, Norwegian Synod of the A.E.L.C., Slovak Ev. Lutheran Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, Suomi Synod, Missouri Synod, Lutheran Free Church, and United Ev. Lutheran Church. See *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1958, p. 460f.

⁵⁸ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1956, p. 426.

to less exclusive and broader participation.⁵⁹ To answer such charges the Augustana and United Lutheran Commissions issued a joint statement explaining the motivations behind the invitation. The statement affirmed the principle that Lutheran unity in America already exists and all those who recognize and acknowledge the fact are simply given the opportunity through the invitation to join with other like-minded Lutherans to seek ways and means of giving form and substance to the existing unity.⁶⁰

Replying affirmatively to the joint invitation were the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, (Danish), and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (Suomi). On December 12, 1956, delegations representing these two bodies met with representatives of Augustana and the United Lutheran Church at the Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, and formed the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity, popularly known as J.C.L.U.⁶¹ The Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity elected Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, vice-president of the Augustana Church, as permanent chairman, with Dr. Raymond W. Wargelin, president of the Suomi Synod, as vice-chairman, Dr. Carl Rasmussen of the United Lutheran Church as secretary, and Dr. Johannes Knudsen, of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church as treasurer. A Steering Committee, a Committee on Doctrine and Living Tradition, a Committee on Patterns of Organization, with two sub-committees, Geographical Boundaries, and Powers and Functions, were formed and assignments made. Considerable time was spent in the presentation of declarations of doctrine and practice on behalf of the four church bodies. Having received these "get-acquainted" presentations, Dr. Fry offered the following resolution,

After hearing the reading and interpretation of the doctrinal statements of the four churches here represented, the Joint Commission rejoices to note that we have among us sufficient ground of agreement in the common confession of our faith as witnessed

⁵⁹ These suspicions were increased by Augustana's refusal to re-enter negotiations with the Joint Committee on Union, as well as the Augustana decision to defer the establishment of an Inter-Lutheran Commission on Theological Study.

⁶⁰ See report of Commission on Ecumenical Relations, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1956, p. 427. See also *Minutes of the meeting of the Commission on Ecumenical Relations of the Augustana Lutheran Church*, held at church headquarters, Minneapolis, Minn., Monday, May 7, 1956.

⁶¹ The Augustana Commissioners were: Dr. Oscar A. Benson, Mr. Wallace Anderson, Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, Dr. Lloyd Burke, Dr. Edgar M. Carlson, Dr. Thorsten A. Gustafson, Dr. Robert W. Holmen, Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, Dr. Karl E. Mattson, Dr. D. Verner Swanson, Dr. P. O. Bersell, Dr. Lyman Brink, Dr. C. W. Sorensen.

by the Lutheran Confession, to justify further procedure in seeking for a basis for the organic union of our churches, including the formulation of a proposed constitution for a united church having in it articles on doctrine and practical matters of organization.⁶²

With the adoption of this resolution it may be said that the Augustana Church through its Commission on Ecumenical Relations, now set its face resolutely toward the goal of organic union with the churches engaged in the current negotiations. It was apparent, however, that the contemplated merger represented, so far as Augustana was concerned, an even greater compromise with its stated principle of Lutheran unity, than did the proposed merger of the American Lutheran Conference group. Indeed, the union contemplated by the American Lutheran Conference envisaged a five-way merger, while J.C.L.U. involved, for the time being at least, only four churches. There were voices both inside as well as outside the Augustana Church that were quick to point out this obvious inconsistency on the part of the Augustana Church. There were some striking circumstances, however, which seemed to justify the current union efforts even though J.C.L.U. would never eventuate in more than a four-way consolidation. In the first place, the invitation which had resulted in the formation of J.C.L.U. was inclusive and not exclusive. The invitation had been extended to every Lutheran body in America, and those who were not involved in J.C.L.U. were absent through their own choice.⁶³ Furthermore, the contemplated consolidation acknowledged and accepted the various ecumenical relationships which the participants had established for themselves and which they intended to continue in whatever merger might eventuate. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, was the fact that the negotiations within the framework of J.C.L.U. were not predicated upon subscription to some refined definition of doctrine in addition to the historic confessions of the Lutheran Church. An open and unequivocal subscription to the historic confessional symbols of the Lutheran Church was to be accepted as sufficient evidence of a true and acceptable Lutheranism. Thus, when those who for one reason or another were opposed to the merger with the United Lutheran Church and charged Augustana with

⁶² *Minutes of the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity*, December 12, 13, 1956. *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1957, p. 456f. Article by E. E. Ryden, "A Hopeful Unity Conference," the *Lutheran Companion*, January 2, 1957.

⁶³ See for example, communication from the Joint Union Committee declining the invitation to participate, as well as other negative replies in *Minutes of the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity*, December 12, 13, 1956, p. 10f.

inconsistency and even insincerity in rejecting the five-way union of T.A.L.C. in favor of a four-way merger of J.C.L.U., Dr. Benson, president of the Augustana Church, defended the Synod for thus "changing its mind" on these grounds.⁶⁴

That Augustana had not abandoned its oft-repeated principle for a comprehensive Lutheran union, and was concerned to broaden the base of participation in J.C.L.U., and thus realize its fundamental ideal of "larger consolidation" was evident from the very beginning of the negotiations. At the first meeting of the Joint Committee on Lutheran Unity, held December 12-13, 1956, the Augustana delegation reminded the assembly of the resolution which Augustana had adopted at its convention in 1955, to the effect that all lines of communication should be kept constantly open for continued conversations with all uncommitted Lutheran bodies in the hope that all such might eventually be included in the negotiations.⁶⁵ In compliance with this mandate the Augustana delegation on J.C.L.U. offered the following resolution,

We request the Joint meeting in session December 12 and 13 to take such action as will provide opportunity to meet with the Joint Union Committee of the A.L.C., E.L.C., and U.E.L.C. merger, for the purpose of discussing bases and possible plans for closer co-operation between all Lutheran Church bodies in America. As well do we request that action be taken to keep the lines of communication open between our joint group and other Lutheran bodies which declined the invitation to join in the present negotiations.

This resolution was referred to the Steering Committee for study with instruction to report to the next meeting of the Joint Commission.⁶⁶ Nothing more was heard regarding this action, however, until the meeting of J.C.L.U. on March 20, 1958, when the Steering Committee presented a special report on the subject of "open channels" as follows:

As we, the members of the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity, eagerly pursue negotiations for the merger of our four bodies into one church, and as we rejoice in the progress thus far, we earnestly desire to declare once again our commitment to the hope for a more comprehensive organic union of Lutheran bodies on this continent when the present ongoing merger nego-

⁶⁴ See President's Annual Report, *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1955, p. 96.

⁶⁵ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1955, p. 446.

⁶⁶ *Minutes of the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity*, December 12, 13, 1956, p. 17f. *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1958, p. 463.

tiations have been consummated. We respectfully invite all our sister Lutheran bodies who share this fervent hope to meet with us and to that end now authorize our steering committee to issue such an invitation at a time that it deems appropriate.⁶⁷

Apparently, the Steering Committee was unable to find any time between the adoption of this resolution and the final merger in 1962 which it deemed "appropriate" to extend or renew invitations to other Lutheran Church bodies to enter the consolidation negotiations, for this is the last time in the official minutes of JCLU that such action is taken. When questioned on this point, the president of the Augustana Church, and chairman of JCLU, Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen stated,

The JCLU did not consider that it was responsible for issuing any additional invitations to anyone, once the original invitation had been issued and answered. It was clearly indicated that the doors were open. The JCLU expressed itself as willing to stop all of its own negotiations and start anew if necessary, to enlarge the number of church bodies negotiating.⁶⁸

That the Augustana Church accepted with real reluctance the compromise of an oft-repeated principle of Lutheran unity may be inferred from the fact that the Augustana Commission on Ecumenical Relations felt it necessary to make special mention of the "principle of comprehension" in a special report regarding JCLU to the synodical convention in 1959. In this report the Commission stated that the proposed four-way merger "is not the immediate realization of the dreams of total union that Augustana has envisioned." Nevertheless it was "by all odds the greatest achievement that can be hoped for at the present time." Then as if to reassure the Church, these significant lines were added,

The new Church body will not be exclusive in spirit. It will be ready at any time to merge with any or all of the other Lutheran Churches. It will be ecumenical in spirit and polity. . . . Augustana's hope for organic union of all Lutheran groups in America will eventually be realized. We are on our way. The goal will be reached in God's good time.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ *Minutes of the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity*, March 20, 1958, p. 72.

⁶⁸ Letter from Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, May 4, 1962. In the light of Dr. Lundeen's statement, the resolution to "authorize our steering committee to issue such an invitation" seems to have very little meaning.

⁶⁹ See "On Threshold of Union," editorial, the *Lutheran Companion*, July 15, 1959.

By 1960 the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity had devised the basic and essential documents which provided for the organizational structure of the new Church. At the Centennial convention of the Augustana Church, held in Rock Island, Illinois, June 6-12, 1960, the Augustana Commission on Ecumenical Relations presented the documents prepared by JCLU for submission to the four church bodies for action. These documents included the Resolution on Merger, with the Agreement of Consolidation, the Constitution of the new Church, the accompanying by-laws, the approved constitution for synods of the new Church, and the approved constitution for congregations of the new Church.⁷⁰

The proposed constitution provided that the name of the new Church was to be the *Lutheran Church in America*. The second article of the constitution, entitled, "Confession of Faith," provided for the confessional basis upon which the *Lutheran Church in America* was to be founded. This most significant article, given in full, is as follows,

Section 1. This church confesses Jesus Christ as Lord of the Church. The Holy Spirit creates and sustains the Church through the Gospel and thereby unites believers with their Lord and with one another in the fellowship of faith.

Section 2. This church holds that the Gospel is the revelation of God's sovereign will and saving grace in Jesus Christ. In Him, the Word Incarnate, God imparts Himself to man.

Section 3. This church acknowledges the Holy Scriptures as the norm for the faith and life of the Church. The Holy Scriptures are the divinely inspired record of God's redemptive act in Christ, for which the Old Testament prepared the way and which the New Testament proclaims. In the continuation of this proclamation in the Church, God still speaks through the Holy Scriptures and realizes His redemptive purpose generation after generation.

Section 4. This church accepts the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds as true declarations of the faith of the church.

Section 5. This church accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism as true witnesses to the Gospel, and acknowledges as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of these symbols.

Section 6. This church accepts the other symbolical books of the evangelical Lutheran Church, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord as further valid interpretations of the confessions of the church.

⁷⁰ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1960, pp. 423ff.

Section 7. This church affirms that the Gospel transmitted by the Holy Scripture, to which the creeds and confessions bear witness, is the true treasure of the Church, the substance of its proclamations, and the basis of its unity and continuity. The Holy Spirit uses the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments to create and sustain faith and fellowship. As this occurs, the Church fulfills its divine mission and purpose.⁷¹

Section 5 of this confessional article is of utmost importance, since it exhibits a very unusual development in the history of the Lutheran Church in America. In almost all cases where Lutheran unity had hitherto been achieved, it had required long and tedious hours of argument and haggling over words, phrases and nuances of meaning, as Lutherans sought to guarantee the orthodoxy of one another by binding each other to specific and often narrowly conceived interpretations of the doctrines set forth in the historic confessions of the Church. In the doctrinal article of the proposed constitution of the Lutheran Church in America, however, Christian unity and brotherhood among Lutherans is recognized and acknowledged as being based and predicated upon a sincere subscription to the historic Lutheran confessions themselves, rather than upon some extra interpretation of the confessions. Furthermore, the doctrinal article affirms the Holy Scriptures as "the divinely inspired record of God's redemptive act in Christ," through which "God still speaks" and "realizes His redemptive purpose generation after generation." In complete harmony with the spirit of the confessional symbols, there is here no attempt to make some "theory of inspiration" the *sine qua non* of unity. In these respects the unity documents of the Lutheran Church in America marked a real advance over the usual procedures which had prevailed in the history of Lutheran unity endeavors in America.

Those in the Augustana Church who feared that the tradition and influence of Augustana might be entirely swallowed up and overwhelmed by the United Lutheran Church, were gratified to note as they studied the submitted documents that the influence of the Augustana Church was to be seen in much that was being planned for the new Church. In the first place, Augustana's position on the lodge question was a factor in bringing about the provision in the documents which was designed to keep newly ordained or newly transferred pastors out of lodge, and to discourage lodge membership generally. In the second place, the plan for American Missions in the Lutheran

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 438f.

Church in America, like the program developed in the Augustana Church, provided for a unified approach to this aspect of church activity. Furthermore, the influence of Augustana was evident also in the polity of the new Church. While the United Lutheran Church may be said to have been the creation of its constituent synods, in the sense that the synods brought the national church into existence, the synods of the Lutheran Church in America are the creation of the national church, just as the thirteen conferences of the Augustana Synod were the creation of the Synod itself. The thirty synods of the new Church sustain very nearly the same relation to the national body as did the Augustana conferences to the Augustana Synod. Again, in the area of theological education and control the documents indicated that the new Church would bear marks of Augustana influence. While the desire of Augustana to vest complete control over theological education in the national body, and so avoid unwholesome interseminary competition and variation in theological training standards, did not materialize, the documents provided for a single national board responsible for theological education. In addition, on the board of each seminary of the new Church provision was made for a mutually agreed upon percentage, from twenty to forty per cent, of the total number of trustees who shall be elected by the supporting synod or synods on nomination by the Board of Theological Education (By-laws, Section X, G, 5). In this way the national church will be enabled to make its voice heard in the decisions of each seminary board. Further, on the examining committee of each synod a given number (four on a committee of ten, and two on a committee of five) shall be designated by the Executive Council of the national church (synodical constitution, Article VII, section 2). Thus, the national church will have a voice in the examination and approval of candidates for the ministry.⁷²

Wednesday, June 8, 1960, had been set aside in the Centennial convention program for a thorough discussion of the merger question. Augustana's action was regarded as a crucial test inasmuch as it was the first of the merging bodies to convene that year, and its action on the merger question could very well determine the success or failure of the whole JCLU enterprise. During the debate a sixteen-page brochure prepared and circulated by four young pastors,⁷³ was introduced which urged the Synod to withhold approval of the merger

⁷² Letter from Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, May 4, 1962.

⁷³ Thomas Basich, Richard Binge, Merle Carlson, and Lavern Grosch.

documents until a number of issues could be renegotiated.⁷⁴ Dr. Lundeen, presiding for the first time as the new president of the Augustana Church, and facing some two thousand delegates,⁷⁵ gave all sides ample opportunity to be heard, and sought to answer every question that was raised. About four o'clock in the afternoon the convention signified its readiness to vote on the merger question. After prayer was offered for divine guidance, Dr. Lundeen called out, "All those in favor of the resolution will signify by saying Aye." Back from the vast assembly came a thunderous "Aye." "All opposed will say "No," said the president. A few voices responded with a somewhat timorous "No." "The ayes have it," announced the president. And thus, one hundred years to the very day from the time the founding fathers at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, had adopted a constitution and founded the Augustana Lutheran Church, this Church had voted to become a part of a larger Lutheran fellowship in America.⁷⁶

Though this vote was overwhelmingly decisive, it was not final. Ratification must be given first by the thirteen conferences, and then final approval at the next annual convention of the Synod by a two-thirds majority, in order to confirm and complete merger action. All thirteen conferences by a majority vote in each case, approved the merger. Accordingly, when the Church convened in Seattle, Washington, June 12-18, 1961, for its one hundred-second annual convention, the question of consolidation was again put to a vote. This occurred on Friday, June 16. The registered total delegation at the convention numbered 590. The vote on the merger was 495 to 21 in favor of consolidation, or 151 votes more than the required two-thirds majority. Thus, the final step had been taken in the procedure to certify the merger.⁷⁷

At no point was the action being taken by the Augustana Church more dramatically symbolized than at Augustana Theological Seminary. During its entire history the Augustana Church has had only one theological seminary; it was organized at the same time as the

⁷⁴ The issues called into question were: executive council representation, executive powers, theological education, the pension plan, and the location of national headquarters.

⁷⁵ Plenary representation, was allowed at the centennial convention.

⁷⁶ Two excellent articles reflecting the drama of the merger actions at the Centennial convention are given by the editor, Dr. E. E. Ryden in *The Lutheran Companion*, "Merger Issue Stirs Synod," June 22, 1960, "Vote to Create New Church," June 29, 1960.

⁷⁷ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1961, pp. 431-506. See also "Augustana's 102nd Synod," the *Lutheran Companion*, July 5, 1961.

Augustana Synod was founded. The seminary has been the only institution owned, operated, and maintained by the Augustana Church for the entire period of the Synod's history; thus the seminary and the Synod developed side by side for one hundred-two years. If any institution may be said to have embodied and exemplified the spirit and temper of the Augustana Church, it was doubtless the theological seminary. And in the merger the seminary was destined to symbolize the consolidation in relation to the Augustana Church, in the sense that as the Augustana Lutheran Church gave up its corporate existence and became part of the Lutheran Church in America, so at the same time Augustana Theological Seminary gave up its corporate identity and became part of a consolidation of four theological schools, one from each of the merging bodies, which would form *The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago*.⁷⁸

Augustana had more to bring to the new Church, however, than its theological seminary. In his final message to the Synod, President Lundeen declared:

Our contribution to the Lutheran Church in America will be 1,354 pastors plus 46 ordinands; our 1,269 congregations with their 629,547 baptized members of whom 423,673 are confirmed, with their Sunday school and Bible class enrollment of over 193,000, with some 26,000 teachers and officers; with their land, buildings, and equipment valued at \$173,311,966; of \$8,004,916 for missions and benevolences and \$29,958,189 for local purposes. With contributions during 1961 a total of \$37,863,105, and a per capita of \$89.36. Further, we will come into the Pension Fund of the L.C.A. with our assets of better than \$11,000,000. In addition we will provide for the new church, social missions and educational institutions with a value of at least \$78,092,072.19. . . . Among other resources . . . there is the resource of our confessional position . . . Our very name "Augustana," the significance of which some of us perhaps have not always fully appreciated, has pointed to our firm yet not rigidly biased adherence to the "Confessio Augustana" or Augsburg Confession. . . . We have an inheritance which we bring with us into the new church, an emphasis upon the need for personal experience and expression of the redeeming grace of God in Christ.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Official Documents of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. See especially Section IV, action by Board of Directors. The four theological seminaries were: Augustana Seminary, Maywood Seminary (U. L. C. A.), Suomi Seminary (Suomi), and Grand View Seminary (A. E. L. C.).

⁷⁹ *Minutes*, Augustana Synod, 1962, pp. 104ff.

The Detroit Convention

The consummation of the story of Augustana Lutheran Church occurred June 25-27, 1962, in Detroit, Michigan, as the Church met for its one hundred-third and final convention. Some six hundred delegates from all parts of the United States and Canada assembled in Detroit's Cobo Hall for the historic event. Beginning on Monday afternoon, June 25, with a pastor's and layman's conference, the convention was formally called to order following the opening service of worship on Monday evening. At the business sessions, Tuesday and Wednesday, June 26 and 27, the delegates listened to the concluding reports from the Church, its officers, institutions, agencies, boards, commissions and committees; they witnessed some dramatic moments as the Synod expressed its appreciation to faithful leaders; they joined in thanksgiving to God for having been privileged to share in the goodly heritage that was Augustana; they looked forward with anticipation to the formation of the new *Lutheran Church in America*. In many ways it was a strange and wonderful convention—an extraordinary experience of sensing both the passing and the making of history. The final hour of the convention was perhaps symbolic of the deepest and best in the life of the Augustana Lutheran Church—a festive service of worship at which forty-five young men were ordained into the holy ministry of Christ's church, and sent forth to be His witnesses on earth. When the ordinands circling the altar sang their class song,

“Lead on, O King eternal
The day of march has come,”

it was as if the vast assembly in Ford Auditorium was hearing a trumpet call to new life and broader service. Then finally, as the president of the Church pronounced the benediction, the long moment of silence which followed seemed almost like a mystic echo of a great “Amen” sounding down a century of years from the fathers and mothers who had laid the foundations of Augustana through sacrifice, toil and prayer, and now beckoned their children to go forward.

On Thursday morning, June 28, more than 7,500 Lutherans assembled in the vast Arena of Cobo Hall. Promptly at nine o'clock, Dr. Malvin H. Lundeen, presiding officer of the constituting convention of the new Church, called the assembly to prayer. A few moments

later the president of each of the uniting bodies stepped to a microphone on the platform and read identical statements affirming the consolidating action of his Church.⁸⁰ The statements having been concluded the chairman declared the *Lutheran Church in America* duly constituted. Thus, in less than ten minutes after the opening of the morning session, the new Church had come into being. To symbolize this historic event a dramatic production entitled, "That Men May Live," was presented. The production reached a climax as four acolytes lighted four huge candles which were then slowly pushed together to form one giant taper, the four separate flames becoming one. At the service of Holy Communion which followed immediately, some 5,000 people came forward to receive the sacrament at the hands of forty officiating pastors. Thus, the Augustana Lutheran Church, which was begotten in prayer and worship at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, 1860, ended its corporate existence in worship and prayer at Detroit, Michigan, 1962. In prayer and worship it entered into a larger fellowship to become part of the Lutheran Church in America.

Now, to be sure, the consolidation at Detroit, June, 1962, was only a partial fulfillment of the ideal of Lutheran unity which the Augustana Church had so often affirmed, and for which it had prayed and labored. Indeed, it may be said that the joy at Detroit was tempered and sobered by the realization of this fact. None the less, there was the firm conviction that even this compromise of a cherished principle and ideal was an act of obedience to the will of God. For at Detroit, and in all the long negotiations leading up to Detroit, there was the implicit, and oft-expressed, hope that even as the four streams of living tradition were now consolidating to form a new and greater and stronger current of Lutheranism, so in God's own good time, the new Lutheran Church in America would itself become a tributary in the formation of an even greater and more inclusive Lutheran Church in the western hemisphere.

It was in this hope and conviction that the Augustana Church laid down its life to enter the larger fellowship. For as the grain of wheat dies in order to bear fruit, so the Augustana Church gave up its corporate existence in order that the heritage which it embodied and expressed may, by God's infinite grace, enrich and be enriched

⁸⁰ The presidents were: A. Einar Farstrup, American Evangelical Lutheran Church, Malvin H. Lundeen, Augustana Lutheran Church, Raymond War-gelin, Suomi Synod, and Franklin Clark Fry, United Lutheran Church.

by that enlarging Community which under God shall some day include all Lutherans in America and Canada in one great household of faith.

Remember, O Lord, Thy Church, to deliver her from all evil and to perfect her in Thy love; and gather her together from the four winds, sanctified for Thy Kingdom which Thou didst prepare for her; for Thine is the power and the glory for ever . . . Amen

(From the Eucharistic Prayer of the Didache)

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